

REMARKS

Upon a late

DISCOURSE

OF

FREE-THINKING:

IN A

LETTER to F.H. D.D.

BY

PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS.

PART THE SECOND.

THE THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N:

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To my very Learned and Honour'd
FRIEND F. H. D. D.
At **LONDON,**
GREAT-BRITAIN.

SIR,

THE Account you was pleas'd to send me, of your Publishing my former Remarks, and of the kind Reception they found among your Country-men, especially your Clergy, to whose Honour and Service they were peculiarly dedicated, was very agreeable. I am sensible, that before my Papers could come to your Hands, there must have been several better Answers, of your own Product at home. If Mine therefore was read with such Distinction, as you speak of; I must impute that good fortune to nothing else, than your known National Humour of admiring Forein Commodities, though you have better of your Native Growth. 'Tis a favorable Errorr however: and we Strangers often fare the better for't. But I am concern'd, that when every thing else pleas'd you; my Declaration at the close, That the Half of my Remarks was as much as the Whole, could not merit your approbation. Why do you thus press and teaze me, both against my Inclination and Interest, to continue those Papers? You acknowledg, enough is already said, to silence both the Book and the Author, both Himself and the whole Sect. You inform me, that he has fled the Pit, that all his Character for Sense and Learning is forfeited and dead: and if so; why impose upon Me that useless Cruelty of molesting him in his Grave? I may add too a Prudential View: I should stake what I have already won, against Nothing at all. If another Part succedes as well as the First; I

acquire no New reputation: if it does not; I lose even the Old. Besides, the Subject it self is alter'd: the Former part of his Book contain'd matters of Consequences, and gave some Play to an Answerer; but the Latter is a dull Heap of Citations, not work'd nor cemented together, mere Sand without Lime: and who would meddle with such dry mouldring Stuff, that with the best Handling can never take a Polish? To produce a good Reply, the First Writer must contribute something: if He is quite low and flat, his Antagonist cannot rise high; if He is barren and jejune, the Other cannot flourish; if He is obscure and dark, the Other can never shine. And then you know my long Law Suit here, which is now remov'd to Dresden: and who would regard the Free-Thinkers, or willingly jade his own Parts, under such Clogs and Impediments? I find, when I set pen to paper, that I sink below my own Level: Quaerit se Ingenium, nec invenit. But if you'd had patience till my Trial was over (for Trial in my cause is the same as Victory) then perhaps your Growing Sect might have felt to their cost;

Et nos tela, pater, ferrumque haud debile dextra
Spargimus, & nostro sequitur de vulnere sanguis.
And yet after so many good Reasons, why I ought now to lie still: see the Power you have over me; when you both urge a Promise, and back it with the Desire of the Clergy of England. During the Vacation at our Leipsic Mart, I took up your Author; and begun where I left off before. I had thought indeed to dispatch his whole Book within the bulk of one Packet: but I have run out beyond my length, and must again stop in the Middle: though I hope you'l have more Conscience in the exercise of your Authority, than to require any Remainder from

Your most obedient Servant

Leipsic, Sept. 18. 1713.
Stilo novo.

PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS.

REMARK

XXXIV.

I Left my Author in his 90th Page, proving the duty and necessity of *Free-Thinking*, from the conduct of your *English* Clergy in Ten Instances. The VIIth was concluded with a Passage out of *Victor Tununensis*; which I hope is so fully clear'd and answer'd, that none of the Fraternity will hereafter vaunt of it, as they used to do, in Bookfellers Shops.

His VIIIth Instance of their ill Conduct, is * Their dayly publishing of Treatises in Dialogue, where they introduce *Atheists*, *Deists*, *Sceptics*, and *Socinians*, speaking for their own opinions with the same strength, subtilty, and art, that those men show either in their books or conversation. Nay one of them (which makes the † IXth Instance) has translated *Lucretius*, the only compleat antient system of Atheism now extant, for the benefit of the *English* reader.

When I consider my self as a *Lutheran*, born and dwelling on the great Continent, I cannot but treat with scorn the weak efforts of this Writer, who while he attacks Christianity in common, brings arguments that reach no farther than Home, within the narrow compass of your own Island. But what, I pray, is the pretended Crime? or where does the wrong conduct lie? I had thought, that to propose objections with their full force, had been a certain sign both of fairness in the Writer, and as-

* Pag. 91. † Pag. 91.

furance of a good Cause. If they make Atheists talk with great *strength and subtilty*, do they not refute them with greater strength, and overcome subtilty with truth? This our Author denies not here: and if so, where is his *Own Conduct*? Before, * he had charg'd the Priests, *That they will not tell the Truth*, when it makes to their disadvantage: but here it seems, *they tell too much*, and give the utmost strength to their adversaries objections. Anon, he will tell us of *their smothering and stifling of Passages in their Translations*; but here the crime is quite contrary, That they translate even *Systems of Atheism* too openly and entirely. What cavilling? what inconsistency? This is exactly,

Quid dem, quid non dem?

Nolo, volo: volo, nolo rursum: cape, cedó.

Since nothing coming from your *English* Clergy can please this nice Author, neither whole Translations nor in part; I'll try, if a *Foreigner* can make him amends; when I rub in his nose, as I have done several already, some more of his *own Translations*.

XXXV.

But (for a *Xth* Instance) your Priests are guilty of *Pious Frauds in Translating and Publishing Books*; even the Holy Bible it self. For, says he, *Εκκλησία* is sometimes render'd *Church*, other times *Assembly*; and *Επίσκοποι* sometimes *Bishops*, other times *Overseers*: Whereas the same word in the Original ought to be *translated universally alike*. Notable Criticism; and vast penetration into the nature of languages! For to wave now, what the Translators of your Bible say on this very head in the close of their Preface; can

* Pag. 82. + Pag. 94, 95. ‡ Pag. 92. * Pag. 93.

our

our Writer be ignorant, that in all tongues whatever, a word of a Moral or Political signification, containing several complex Ideas arbitrarily join'd together, has seldom any correspondent word in any other language, which extends to all those Ideas? Nay, that in the same language most Moral words by tract of Time and instability of common Use either lose or gain some of their Ideas, and have a narrower or larger meaning in one age than in another? Physical words indeed, as ἥλιος, Σελήνη, Θάλασσα, whose significations are uncompounded and immutable, may be always express'd alike, *Sun, Moon, and Sea*: but the other sort ought not and cannot, without great ambiguity and absurdity. See the variety of Ἐκκλησία in *Greek*: it means the Place, the Building, for an assembly; it means an Assembly or Congregation in that place: thus in the ancient Heathen times: but in the Christian usage, besides these Significations, it means the Whole of a Town or City, who are wont to assemble in one or more such Places, whether they are actually assembled, or not; it means the Whole of a District, Diocese, Province, Nation; it means diffusively the whole Community of the Christian Name; it means the Governors of such Places, or Assemblies, or Districts, of one or more, of larger or less. And has your English language One single word, that is coextended through all these significations? The case is much alike in the other word Ἐπίσκοπος. Let our Author then learn, before he sets up to teach. Had he read any good translation, antient or modern, could he possibly be so pedantic with his *Universally alike*? His own Book indeed is *universally alike*, a perpetual detail either of his own shufflings or mistakes.

R E M A R K S.

But let us view his particular Texts. He's angry, that in *Acts* xix, 32. the word *Εκκλησία* is render'd *Assembly*, and not as usually the *Church*. *For, says he, in this place where it manifestly signifies *the People*, had the Translators said, *The Church* (instead of *Assembly*) *was confus'd, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together; the Signification of the word Church would not have admitted of any doubt about its meaning.* Unfortunate blunderer! I cannot decide, whether there's more nonsense in his expression, or more stupidity in his remark. It's *signification*, says he, would admit of no doubt about it's *meaning*: that is, it's *signification* about it's *signification*. Well; but *Εκκλησία* there means *the People*; and had it been render'd *Church*, we should have known the *Church* had meant the *Laiety*, as well as the *Priests*. What Priest ever denied, that *Church* in your English Bibles does generally comprehend all believers, People as well as Clergy? But in this place, that *Assembly*, which he would call a *Church*, was a mob of *Pagans* got together in the Town Theatre, some for fear of their manufactures (as your Silkweavers once at *London*) and the most for they knew not what. And though *Εκκλησία*, which signifies Any Assembly, is properly and decently used here in the original: can your English word *Church*, that from its first rise has been consecrated to a religious sense, be extended to a heathen mutiny? This very Instance shews, what I said before in general, That the Political words in different languages are seldom totally equivalent. And those foreign words, that are not interpreted but adopted and retain'd, as *Apostle*, *Bishop*, *Priest*, *Deacon*, have always a narrower sense, where they're transplanted, than in their first soil, And yet our

* *Pag. 92.*

Wri-

REMARKS.

3

Writer adds seriously (for there's no mark of Raillery or Jest) that had the Translators done their duty in this Passage, there could have been no doubt about the meaning of the word *Church*. No doubt in the least: for if that Assembly could be call'd a *Church*, you would have *Churches* at your Opera's, *Churches* at Comedies; at Puppet-shows, at Masquerades. If he had taught your Parliament this Language; he might have sav'd the great charge of their Fifty new *Churches*: for with one Word he has built as many, as there are Coffee-houses in *London*; and, what is more, he has prov'd Himself and his Free-thinkers to be excellent *Church-Men*.

His other Exception is *Acts* xx, where οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τῆ ἐκκλησίας, * *The Elders, the Presbyters of the Church* (v. 17.) are said to be ἐπίσκοποι (v. 28.) *Overseers over all the Flock*. Here instead of *Overseers* he would have it render'd *Bishops*: that it might appear, that *Bishops* and *Presbyters* in Scripture phrase are synonymous words. And what if they should be so, *idem* πρεσβύτεροι qui ἐπίσκοποι, the first the name of their Age and Order, the latter of their Office and Duty? Does he think to fright your *Bishops* with this? Does this affect the cause of *Episcopacy*? How then came *Theodorit* a Bishop, *Theophylact* an Archbishop, and *Chrysostom* a Patriarch, not to be aware of it; when they expressly affirm, what our Writer would have appear? They, with all Christian Antiquity, never thought themselves and their Order to succeed the Scripture ἐπίσκοποι, but the Scripture Ἀπόστολοι; they were ἀΐδοχοι τῶν Ἀποστόλων, the *Successors of the Apostles*. The Summ of the Matter is this. Though new Institutions are form'd; new Words are not

coin'd for them, but Old ones borrow'd and applied. *Επίσκοπος*, whose general Idea is *Overseer*, was a word in use long before Christianity, a word of universal Relation, to Oeconomical, Civil, Military, Naval, Judicial and Religious Matters. This word was assum'd to denote the Governing and Presiding Persons of the Church, as *Διάκονος* (another word of vulgar and diffus'd use) to denote the Ministerial. The *Presbyters* therefore, while the Apostles liv'd, were *ἐπίσκοποι* *Overseers*. But the Apostles, in foresight of their approaching Martyrdom, having selected and appointed their Successors in the several Cities and Communities, as St. Paul did *Timothy* at *Ephesus*, and *Titus* at *Crete*, A. D. LXIV, four years before his Death; what Name were these Successors to be call'd by? Not *Ἀπόστολοι*, *Apostles*: their Modesty (as it seems) made them refuse it; they would keep that Name proper and sacred to the first *Extraordinary* Messengers of Christ; though they really succeeded them in their Office, in due Part and Measure, as the *Ordinary* Governors of the Churches. It was agreed therefore, over all Christendom at once, in the very next Generation after the Apostles, to assign and appropriate to Them the word *Επίσκοπος* or *Bishop*. From that time to this, that Appellation, which before included a *Presbyter*, has been restrain'd to a superior Order. And here's nothing in all this but what has happen'd in all Languages and Communities in the World. See the *Notitia* of the *Roman* and *Greek* Empires: and you'll scarce find one name of any State Employment, that in course of time did not vary from its primitive Signification. So that should our *Lutheran* Presbyters contend they are Scripture *Bishops*, what would they get by it? No more, than lies

lies in the Syllables. The time has been, when a Commander even of a single Regiment was call'd *Imperator*: and must every such now a days set up to be *Emperors*? The one pretense is altogether as just as the other.

But to speak a word to his Version. He would have it *Bishops*, in *Acts*, xx, as it is in other places, and not *Overseers*. Our *Luther* indeed has translated it here and every where *Bischoffen*: but, if my Countrymen do not hear me, I must beg his excuse. *Bishop* and *Bischoff* give no internal Idea to an illiterate *Englishman* or *German*. As an Exotic word, they have no notion of it but from seeing a modern *Bishop*. To such therefore, this Version, *you Presbyters, whom the Holy Ghost hath made Bishops over all the Flock*, gives a Sense erroneous and false. Well then is it translated in your Bible *Overseers*: and if our awkward *Free-thinker* had chang'd the Tables, and expostulated, not why here *Overseers*, but why not every where else; perhaps he could not have been so easily answer'd.

XXXVI.

Another *Pious Fraud* is laid to your Translators, *Acts* vii, 59. * *And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my Spirit*. For, says he, the word *God* has no Manuscript nor Printed Copy in any Language to vouch it. And was this *Insertion* made fraudulently? Or is it not an *Impious Fraud* in this Writer, to bring so false a charge against a book that deserves his veneration? Are not the words *Upon God* printed in *Italic Letter*, to warn the Reader as usually, that they are not in the Original? In the same Chapter there are these

* Pag 93.

several words *inserted*, to make the Sense clearer, *So much as, Abraham, Begat, Time, The Father, Saying, Him, So*: and all distinguish'd in *Italic* with a nice and religious exactness. Why did not our Writer make exceptions to those? He can easily allow Them: but the name of *God* to be inserted is a *Free-thinker's* aversion. Well, but had the Translators conceal'd the insertion, and not proclaim'd it by an *Italic* Letter, where had been the *Pious Fraud*? What interest, what Priestcraft can it serve? Is this a Text bandied for the Rights of the Church? Can he deny, that the words *Upon God* supplied in the Version, are manifestly understood in the Original? The *Greek* word is *ἐπικαλέσμενον*, *calling upon*: and our Author is uncommonly honest, when he charges one word *God*, and not two, *Upon God*, to be the Insertion. So that *they stoned Stephen calling upon — and saying, Lord, &c.* Pray, what or whom did he *call upon*? certainly either *God* or *the Lord*; and let our Author take his choice. Nay, the words being thus in the Text according to the present Copies, *ΕΠΙΚΑΛΟΥΜΕΝΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΛΕΓΟΝΤΑ*; should I affirm, that a word is dropt out, either *Θ* *N* *God* absorpt by the preceding syllable *ON*, or *Κ* *N* *the Lord* by the following syllable *ΚΑΙ*, and that your Translators were of the same opinion, considering that *ἐπικαλέσμενον τὸ θεόν* and *τὸ κύριον* come so frequently in the Septuagint; I dare challenge all the Tribe to answer it, though they take the Cismarine Critic to their aid and assistance.

REMARKS.

XXXVII.

Well, but the *Postscripts* of the II^d Epistle to *Timothy*, and of the Epistle to *Titus*, wherein the former is stil'd, * *First Bishop* of the Church of the *Ephesians*, and the latter of the *Cretans*, were both prov'd in Parliament to be bold and spurious Additions made by your Reverend Editors. This is formidable indeed to tell Us at *Leipsic*; where your English Parliament mult needs have greater authority, than any General Council. But how, pray, was it prov'd there? Was it enacted by all the Estates, and with the Bishops concurrence? Or was it voted only in the Lower House? Or, which is yet lower, was it only debated? Or when was this great transaction? He quotes for it *Diurnal Occurrences*, a book unknown in these parts: so that I can only guess, either at the time or the manner of it. However I durst lay a small wager, that it was done in what you call your Rump Parliament; and this learned Proof was made there by some Lay Elder in buff. Be that as it will; I dare tell our Author, without any Vote of our *German Diet* in opposition to his Parliament; That it was never prov'd there nor any where else; and that he speaks not one true word in all this Paragraph. For he blunders, when he calls them *Postscripts*; that word ever implying, that they were subjoin'd by the Writer of the Letter preceding. But no body yet either believ'd or affirm'd, that These were underwritten by St. *Paul* himself. They are nothing but Memorandums or Endorsements, written by others, long after the death of the Apostle. But be they *Postscripts* or *Subscripts*; your Translators neither made them,

* Pag. 94.

nor recommended them for Scripture. And his Parliamentary Proof, that *those Additions were Made by the Reverend Editors*, does miserably fail him. Impudence and Noise against plain Matter of Fact! Let him look into Dr. *Mill's* Edition, and he'll see that very few of the Manuscripts want them: and they were printed in the best *Greek* Editions, before your Editors were born.

XXXVIII.

* *It is certain, says he, the Priests may plead the Authority of the Fathers for Forgery, Corruption, and Mangling of Authors with more reason, than for any of their Articles of Faith.* He grows in impudence and profaneness; but how does he make this out? from a † Passage of St. *Jerom*, the import of which he understands not, and the words he has wilfully perverted. One *Vigilantius* had accus'd St. *Jerom*, as a favourer of *Origen's* Heresies: because he had translated several of his Writings into *Latin*. The Father replies to this effect, 'That the nature of
' his Studies led him to read all sorts of Books, such
' as those of *Origen*, *Apollinarius*, *Eusebius*, who in
' some points indeed were Heretical, but in others
' had given great light to the Scriptures, and done
' eminent service to the Church: That some of their
' Books he had translated into *Latin*, for the use of
' those that understood not the *Greek*; but not so
' as to propagate their Heresies; for he had either
' omitted those Tracts, or rescinded or refuted
' those Passages, which might pervert or scandalize
' the unlearned Reader *.

Here we see, St. *Jerom*

* Pag. 96. † Ep. ad Vigilantium Tom. iv. Ed. Nova p. 275.

* See also Ep. De erroribus Origenis p. 345. Adversus Rufinum Apologia 1 & 11.

does

does not excuse himself (as our Writer turns it) for *mangling of Authors*, but for translating them at all. But how in justice can the omission of some Tracts or Passages, where the Translator is free to take what he pleases, be call'd *mangling of Authors*? Did not *Ferom* acquaint the Publick both in his Prefaces to the respective Books, and in these Epistles, that he had left out such Passages? Did he *mangle Origen* in the Original, and procure the *Greek Copies* to be raz'd or interpolated? How was *Origen* then *mangled*, whose works were preserv'd entire both then and long after? Neither had *Ferom's* Translation that consequence then, as in our days a numerous Edition propagated from the Press. His Version was but one written Copy, that might be transcrib'd by some of his friends, or a few others that were curious. And what is there in all this, unworthy of an honest man? Were I to translate *Petronius's Civil War*, or some of the chaste Epigrams of *Martial*: should I be counted a *Mangler*, because I added not all their Obscenities? Your *Free-thinkers* at that rate are the greatest *Manglers of Authors*, who have taken a contrary course, and cull'd all the lewd and smutty Passages of the antient Poets, and printed them together.

But our Writer cannot pass this Passage of *St. Ferom*, without a cast of his skill and fidelity. The words cited by him are, *Si igitur quae bona sunt, transtuli; & mala vel amputavi vel correxi, vel tacui; arguendus sum, cur per me LATINI bona Origenis habeant, & mala ignorent?* which our faithful Writer thus translates: *Am I to be blam'd for making MEN acquainted with what is good in Origen, and keeping 'em ignorant of what is bad in him.* Where the Father says *Latini*, the *Latins*; our Author says *Men* in general; on purpose to insinuate that *Ferom* had

suppress'd or mutilated or corrupted Origen's Greek Copies. For while those were in being and entire, *Ferom* could not keep all *Men* ignorant of what was bad in Origen, but only the *Latins*.

Where the Father says, *Qui omnium Psalmorum commentarios haeretici hominis vertit in nostrum eloquium*: our Writer englishes it thus, *Who translated into Latin the Commentaries of EUSEBIUS of Caesarea, a grand Heretic*. The Father indeed means *Eusebius*; but names him not: but our Writer has put him into the Text, and in Capitals too, to make the Reader mind it; and then bestows out of his own store the epithet *Grand*; and puts it in the mouth of St. *Ferom*. Why this venom thrown upon *Eusebius*; but that the *Freethinkers* hate him, as one of the chief Writers of the Church? Could our Author be ignorant, that it was a great dispute then, and continues so still, whether *Eusebius* was really a *Heretic*, that is, an *Arian*, or no? Has not your learned Dr. *Cave*, in a late elaborate Dissertation, done justice to his Character? Why then a *Grand Heretic* in the Version, when it's bare *Heretic* in the Text? An honest Writer indeed, who in the very place where he cries out on *Forgery*, *Corruption*, and *Mangling*, cannot himself refrain from *forging*, *corrupting*, and *fraudulently adding*.

XXXIX.

I pass over his trifling Instances of mangling Father *Paul's* Letters, * *Baumgarten's* Travels, and *Anthony Wood's* History: which omissions he has here kindly supplied, out of dear love to *Treason*, *Superstition*, and *Scandal*. And yet You perhaps in *England* can even in these Trifles shew his fraud and prevarication.

* Pag. 94, 95, 96.

He then commences his *Third Section*, with pretended Objections and Answers about *Free-thinking*, taken in a good and legitimate sense. Is he always at his Juggling, and shifting the true Question? Do's he hope to slur his unwary Reader with such a palpable Imposture? *Free-thinking* here for many * Pages together is put for Common use of Reason and Judgment, a lawful Liberty of Examining, and in a word, good *Protestantism*. Then whip about, and it stands for Scepticism, for Infidelity, for bare *Atheism*. But his Mask is too thin and too pellucid to cover his true Face. He is still known for a mere Atheist; though he talks of *Free-thinking* in words that may become a Christian. What *Aristippus* once said, when he was pleas'd with some sweet Unguent, *Curse on those effeminate wretches, that have made so pretty a thing scandalous*; may be applied to Him, and his Tribe, for bringing a scandal on so good a Word as *Free-thinking*, that does not belong to them. They *Free*, by way of distinction? that have the most slavish of Systems, mere Matter, eternal Sequel of Causes; chain'd Fatalists, fetter'd *Spinozists*. They *Thinkers*, by way of eminence? who have proper title to no Thought, but that of the Fool, when he said in his heart, *there was no God*. For this is the First and the Last of all their glorious searches.

But I could have sav'd him one Objection, That † *Freethinking may produce a great number of Atheists*. Pray, be not in pain for that; unless he means (as he often do's) *Free-thinking* and *Atheism* for synonymous words. * *It is possible*, says his Objector, *that if Free-thinking be allow'd, some men may think themselves into Atheism*. Courage! and dismiss those dismal apprehensions. For however it might be of

* Pag. 99. — 110. † Pag. 105. * Pag. 104.

old times, or now among some *Hottentots* or *Iroquois*, where the materials of Thinking are scanty, and the methods uncultivated; there's no danger of this in *England*, in that Light of Science and Learning. A person there may easily rob, plunder, perjure, debauch, or drink himself into Atheism: but it's impossible he can *think* himself into't. Let him think thoroughly; come duly prepar'd, and proceed patiently and impartially; and I dare be answerable for him, without an Office of Insurance.

XL.

While I was looking on his Passage of *Zosimus* * (whom out of his profound skill in Greek, he twice writes *Zozimus*) I had like to have dropt a memorable Paragraph, which shews his great affection to your Clergy. He complains of the † *great charge of maintaining such numbers of Ecclesiastics, as a great evil to Society, and a Burden never felt on any other occasion*. Now how shall I accost him? as a grand Historian, or a shrew'd Politician? For I know he's above the low considerations of Divine Worship, Truth, Piety, Salvation, and Immortality. But what news does he tell us? That the supporting of Priests is a burden unknown before Christianity? Had he read over even those Authors alone, with whose twice-borrow'd Scraps he has fill'd his Margin; he would have learnt, That both in *Greece* and *Italy*, before our Saviour's Birth, the Heathen Priests were more in Number, higher in Dignity, and better provided with Endowments, Salaries, and Immunities, than now you are in *England*. The like was before in *Egypt*, and in every other Country, where Humanity and Letters had any footing. Many of

* Pag. 117, 118. † Pag. 114.

his Authors (whom he cites as *Free-thinkers*) were Priests themselves, *Josephus, Plutarch, Cato, * Cicero* &c. and the last named was made so after his Consulate, the highest Post of Honour and Power then in the Universe : nay (to make our Author quite lay him aside forever) he had the *Indeleble Character* too; for being once made a Priest, a Priest he was to be for Life. But what an Adversary am I writing against, wholly ignorant of common History? And his Politics are as low too, that would extirpate the whole Order of your Clergy; and so bring your Country to the ignorance of the *Savages*, to a worse condition than your old Ancestors were in, while they had their *Bards* and their *Druids*. For it ever was and ever will be true, in all Nations, under all Manners and Customs, *No Priesthood, no Letters, no Humanity*; and reciprocally again, *Society, Laws, Government, Learning, a Priesthood*. What then would our thoughtless *Thinker* be at? Sink the Order of the present Clergy to save charges to the Public? And pay the same or double, to maintain as many † for *Epicurus*, or *Jupiter*, or *Baal*: for some Order of Priests there will be. Though even take him in his *Free-thinking* Capacity; he can never conceive nor wish a Priesthood, either quieter for Him, or cheaper, than the present Church of *England*. Of your Quietness, himself is a convincing Proof, who has writ this outrageous Book, and has met with no Punishment nor Prosecution. And for the Cheapness, That appear'd lately in one of your Parliaments; when the Accounts exhibited show'd, That 6000 of your Clergy, the greater part of your whole number, had at a middle rate one with another not 50 pounds a year. A poor emolument for so long, so laborious,

* Γένεσις τῆς ἱερίας, ὡς Ἀγγελοὶ Ῥωμαῖοι καλεῖται. Plut. in Cic.

† See Remark the *Vth*.

so expensive an Education, as must qualify them for Holy Orders. While I resided at *Oxford*, and saw such a conflux of Youth to their annual Admissions; I have often studied and admir'd, why their Parents would under such mean encouragements design their Sons for the Church; and those the most towardsly and capable and select Genius's among their Children; who must needs have emerg'd in a Secular Life. I congratulated indeed the felicity of your Establishment, which attracted the Choice Youth of your Nation for such very low Pay: but my wonder was at the Parents, who generally have Interest, Maintenance, and Wealth, the first thing in their view: till at last one of your State Lotteries ceas'd my astonishment. For as in That, a few glittering Prizes, 1000, 5000, 10000 Pounds among an infinity of Blanks, drew troops of Adventurers; who, if the whole Fund had been equally ticketed, would never have come in: so a few shining Dignities in your Church, Prebends, Deaneries, Bishopricks, are the *pious fraud* that induces and decoys the Parents, to risk their Childs Fortune in it. Every one hopes his Own will get some great Prize in the Church, and never reflects on the Thousands of Blanks in poor Country Livings. And if a Foreigner may tell you his mind, from what he sees at home, 'Tis This part of your Establishment, that makes your Clergy excel Ours. Do but once level all your Preferments, and you'll soon be as level in your Learning. For instead of the Flower of the *English* youth, you'll have only the Refuse sent to your Academies; and those too cramp'd and crippled in their Studies for want of Aim and Emulation. So that if your *Free-thinkers* had any Politics, instead of suppressing your whole Order, they should make you all alike: or, if That cannot be done, make your Preferments

a very

a very Lottery in the whole Similitude. Let your Church Dignities be pure Chance Prizes, without regard to Abilities or Morals or Letters: as a Journeyman (I think) in that State Lottery was the favorite Child of Fortune.

XLI.

But again, before I come to the inviting Passage of *Zosimus*, I shall gather some of his scatter'd Flowers, and comprise them under one Remark. * If any good Christian, says he, happens to reason better than ordinary, the Priests presently charge him with *Atheism*. He means only your *English* Priests, as I see by his Instances: and naughty men They, if any of them do so. But I'll give him a word of Comfort, and offer my self as Sponsor for them, that none of them will call Him *Atheist*, for reasoning better than ordinary. Good man, to avoid that odious name, he has sprinkled all his pages with mere Nonsense out of pure Consideration and Forecast.

To shew his good Taste and the virtuous Turn of his mind, he praises two Abuses upon *James* the I, † That he was a Doctor, more than a King; and was priest-ridden by his Archbishop; as the most VALUABLE passages in Father *Paul's* Letters: and yet, as I have been told, those Passages are spurious and forg'd. Well, but were they genuine and true, are those the things he most values? O the vast Love and Honour he bears to the Crown and the Mitre! But his Palate is truly constant and uniform to it self: he drudges in all his other Authors, Ancient and Modern, not to find their Beauties, but their Spots; not to gather the Roses, but the Thorns; not to suck good Nutriment, but Poison. A thou-

* Pag. 85. † Pag. 94, 95.

find bright pages in *Plutarch* and *Tully* pass heavy with him without relish: but if he chances to meet with a suspicious or sore Place; then he's feasted and regaled, like a Fly upon a Ulcer, or a Beetle in Dung: and with those delicious scraps put together, he has dress'd out this Book of *Free-thinking*.

But have a care of provoking him too much; for he has still in reserve more * *Instances of your Conduct: Your Declamations against Reason*; such false Reason, I suppose, as He and his Tribe would put off for good Sterling: *Your Arts and Methods of discouraging Examination into the Truths of Religion*; such Truths forsooth of Religion as This, That Religion it self is all false: and again, *Your encouraging examination, when either Authority is against you* (the Authority he means of your late King *James*, when one of his Free-thinking Doctors thought himself into Popery) or *When you think that Truth is certainly on your Side*: he will not say, that Truth is certainly on your side, but only that you think so: however he allows here you are sometimes sincere; a favour he would not grant you in some of his former Instances.

But the last and most cutting Instance is, † *Your instilling Principles into Youth*; no doubt he means those pernicious Principles of Fearing God, Honouring the King, Loving your Neighbour as your Selves, Living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World. O the glorious Nation you would be! if your stiff Parsons were once displac'd, and *Free-thinkers* appointed Tutors to your young Nobility and Gentry. How would Arts, Learning, Manners, and all Humanity flourish in an Academy under such Preceptors? Who instead of your Bible should read *Hobbes's Leviathan*; should instill early the sound doctrines of the Mortality of the Soul,

* Pag. 97. † Pag. 97.

and the sole Good of a voluptuous Life. No doubt such an Establishment would make you a happy people, and even a rich: for our Youth would all desert us in *Germany*, and presently pass the Sea for such noble Education.

The beginning of his III^d Section, where (as I remark'd before) *Free-thinking* stands for no more than *Thinking*, may pass in general for Truth, though wholly an Impertinence. For who in *England* forbids Thinking? Or who ever made such Objections, as he first raises and then refutes? He dare not sure insinuate, as if none of your Clergy *thought*; nor examin'd any Points of Doctrine: but took a Systeme of Opinions by force and constraint, under the terrour of an Inquisition, or the dread of Fire and Fagot. So that we have xx pages of mere amusement, under the ambiguity of a word. Let your Clergy once profess, that They are the True *Free-thinkers*, and you'll soon see the unbelieving Tribe renounce their new Name.

However in these sapless Pages he has scatter'd a mark of his great Learning. He says, * *The infinite variety of Opinions, Religions, and Worships among the antient Heathens never produc'd any disorder or confusion.* What? was it no disorder, when *Socrates* suffer'd Death for his Opinions; when *Aristotle* was impeach'd and fled; when *Stilpo* was banish'd; and when *Diagoras* was proscrib'd? Were not the *Epicureans* driven out from several Cities, for the debaucheries and tumults they caus'd there? Did not † *Antiochus* banish all *Philosophers* out of his whole Kingdom; and for any one to learn of them, made it Death to the Youth himself, and loss of Goods to his Parents? Did not *Domitian* expell all the *Philosophers* out of *Rome* and whole *Italy*? Did the

* Pag. 101. † *Athenaeus, lib. xii, p. 547.*

Galli, the vagabond Priests of *Cybele*, make no disturbances in Town and Country? Did not the *Romans* frequently forbid *Strange Religions* and external Rites that had crept into the City, and banish the Authors of them? Did the *Bacchanals* create no disorders in *Rome*, when they endanger'd the whole State; and thousands were put to death for having been initiated in them? In a word, was that no disturbance in *Egypt*, which *Juvenal* tells of his own knowledge, (and which frequently used to happen) when in two neighboring Cities their Religious Feuds ran so high; that at the annual Festival of one, the other out of zeal went to disturb the Solemnity; and after thousands were fighting on both sides, and many Eyes and Noses lost, the Scene ended in Slaughter, and the body slain cut into bits, and eaten up raw by the Enemies? And all this Barbarity committed, because the one side worship'd *Crocodiles*, and the other kill'd and eat them.

summus utrinque

*Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum
Odit uterque locus; cum solos credat habendos
Esse deos, quos ipse colit.*

Let him go now, and talk facetiously at his Club,
That among the Pagans there was no *Polemic Divinity*.

XLII.

We are now come to a grand Secret of your Priestcraft, **The Toleration of Vice, by which all the Rogues and Fools are engag'd in your Party*. This, he says, was put in practice with success, as early as *Constantine the Great*, who (as *Zozimus* tell us) after he had committed such horrible Villanies, which the Pagan Priests told him were not expiable in their

* Pag. 117, 118.

Religion; being assur'd by an Egyptian Bishop, that there was no Villany so great, but was to be expiated by the Sacraments of the Christian Religion, He quitted the Religion of his Ancestors, and embrac'd the NEW IMPIETY: so Zozimus impiously calls the Christian Religion. Now the Business it self, laid to Constantine's Charge here by a bigotted Pagan, is too stale and trivial, to deserve a new Answer; having been fully refuted both by the Ecclesiastic Historians of old, and several of the Moderns. But what I here animadvert on, is the prodigious Aukwardness of our Writer, both in his Version and Application of this Passage.

Zozimus, a poor superstitious Creature (and consequently, as one would guess, an improper witness for our *Free-thinker*) who has fill'd his little History not more with malice against the Christians, than with bigotry for the Pagans; who treats his Reader with Oracles of the *Palmyrenes* and *Sibylls*; with annual Miracles done by *Venus*, where Gold and Silver swum upon Water; with Pretages and Dreams of old Women; with Thunders and Earthquakes as if they were Prodigies; with a dead Body vanishing in the middle of an Army; with Omens, and with Predictions from Entrails of Beasts; with an Apparition of *Pallas* and her *Gorgon*, and with the Spectre of *Achilles*; with wooden Idols that Fire could not burn; with a Necklace of the Goddess *Rhea*, that executed Divine Vengeance; who imputes the taking of *Rome* by *Alarich* to the omission of Pagan Sacrifices; and the decay of the Roman Empire to *Constantine's* neglecting the *Ludi Saeculares*: this wise and judicious Author is brought in for a good Evidence; and our avow'd Enemy to Superstition connives at all this Trumpery, for the sake of one stab at the reputation of *Constantine*, and the honour of Christianity.

But

But how has he manag'd and represented it? The Story, as * *Zosimus* himself tells it, is thus. ' *Constantine* being troubled in Conscience for some Crimes he had committed, applied to the Heathen Priests for expiation. They answering, that they had no way of Expiation for Crimes of so deep a Die; a certain *Egyptian* told him, That if he would turn Christian, all his Sins would be immediately forgiven him. *Constantine* liking this well, and after a renuntiation of Paganism partaking of the Christian Rites, ὁ ἀσεβείας τῶ ἀρχαῖ ἐποίησατο, τῶ Μαυλεῖν ἔχεν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, for his FIRST INSTANCE OF IRRELIGION, he began to suspect and cry down the Art of foretelling things from the Entrails of Beasts; for having had many Events truly predicted to him by that Art, he was afraid others would make use of it against himself. This is a faithful Version; for that Μαυλεῖν here means *Haruspicina*, the art of Divination by Entrails, appears from p. 157. and other places of that Author.

How amazing now is the Ignorance of our *Free-thinker*? unless perhaps he will plead Impudence: for with such men, *excusatus est voluntate peccare quam casu*, its counted a smaller fault to prevaricate on purpose, than err by mistake. He stops his Citation and Version in the very middle of the Sentence, and interprets ὁ ἀσεβείας τῶ ἀρχαῖ, THE NEW IMPIETY; and then subjoins with a sneer, So *Zosimus* impiously calls the Christian Religion. If *Zosimus* speaks not impiously, some body else does. For with Him ἀσεβεία, Irreligion, Neglect of Worship, has only reference to the Pagan Rites, and particularly to Sacrifices and *Haruspices*. These Con-

Constantine had abandon'd, and for that reason deserv'd as well as * *Cato* the *Censor*, to be put into our Writer's *List of Free-thinkers*. But see the Partiality! *Constantine* has lost his Favour, because he first made the Government Christian: and an Author must be mangled, Sense and Grammar distorted, all rules of Syntax perverted, to bring out a little Blasphemy. *Ἀρχὴν ὁ ἀσεβείας ἐποίησεν*, Embrac'd the New Impiety? and the Christian Religion meant by it? Intolerable Construction, and monstrous! there's scarce a such like Prodigy in his former Version of *Cicero*.

XLIII.

The next Witness, that he summons from the Shades, is *Julian the Apostate*: and I wonder he did not call along with him *Judas Iscariot*. But what does *Julian* depose? Why, † the foreſaid Conversion of *Constantine*, gave occasion to him to satirize thus our Holy Religion: * *Whoſoever is a Ravisher, a Murderer, guilty of Sacrilege or any other abomination, let him come boldly: for, when I have waſh'd him with this Water, I'll immediately make him clean and innocent: and if he commits the ſame crimes again, I'll make him after he has thump'd his Breſt and beat his Head, as clean as before.* And what can our Writer make of this Satire, though I've mended his Version for him? A ridiculous and ſtale Banter, us'd by *Celsus* and others before *Julian*, upon the Christian Doctrines, Baptiſm, Repentance, and Remiſſion of Sins. Baptiſm is rallied as mere waſhing, and Repentance as thumping the head and other outward Grimace. The inward Grace, the intrinsic Change of Mind are left out of the Character. And whom are we to believe, theſe Pagans or our Own ſelves? Are we to fetch our notions of the Sacraments

* Pag. 135. † Pag. 118. * *Juliani Caesares*, in fine.

from

from Scraps of *Julian* and *Celsus*? or from the Scripture, the pure Fountain; from what we read, know, and profess? And yet the Banter came more decently out of *Celsus* an *Epicurean*'s mouth, than out of *Julian*'s, the most bigoted Creature in the World. He to laugh at Expiation by Baptism, whose whole life after his Apostacy was a continued course of *καθάρσεις*, Washings, Purgations, Expiations, with the most absurd ceremonies? addicted to the whole train of Superstitions; Omens, Presages, Prodigies, Spectres, Dreams, Visions, Auguries, Oracles, Magic, Theurgic, Psychomantic? Whose whole Court in a manner consisted of *Harnuspices* and *Sacrificuli*, and Philosophers as silly as they? Who was always poring in the Entrails of Cattel to find Futurities there? Who if he had return'd Victor out of *Persia* (as his very Pagan friends jested on him) would have extinguish'd the whole species of Bulls and Cows, by the number of his Sacrifices? I have drawn this Character of him, from his own Writings, and the Heathens his contemporaries: that I might not bring suspected testimonies from Christian Authors. Though even These allow him to have been *egregiae indolis, an extraordinary Genius*; if he had not been spoilt by the Philosophers his Masters. The truth is; those persons, for their Professorial interest, and to keep the Pagan System in some countenance against the objections of Christians, had quite alter'd the old Schemes of Philosophy; and pretended to more Impulses, Inspirations, Revelations, and Commerce with the Deity, than Christians could truly do. Not one of those sanctified Philosophers, but had Dreams, Visions, and Extatic Colloquies with Daemons every night: and with this trumpery they drew *Julian* off from Christianity, and made him think himself as great an Adept,

as

as any of his Teachers. He * saw the *Sun* in a Vision, speaking to him in Verse, and foretelling the death of *Constantius*; besides other innumerable communications with his favorite God *Mulbras*. This was the sly way they took; *clavum clavo*, to surfeit him with Revelations, enough for a *St. Brigit*: nor could they ever have made him Apostatize, but by infatuating him with Superstitions. However, though Christianity suffer'd, by losing one of his great Abilities and moral Virtues; our modern Atheists can never reckon him on Their side, among the list of *Free-thinkers*.

XLIV.

Our Writer raises an Objection; which, unless he had better answer'd, he had better have let alone; † *That Free-thinkers themselves are the most infamous, wicked, and senseless of all Mankind*. He pretends not yet to refute this from Fact and Experience, by telling Who he is, or Who are members of his *Growing Sect*, that we might bring their Characters to the Touchstone; but he argues forsooth *a priori*.

The reproach of *Senseless* he confutes with ease, by a *self-evident* Proposition; * *For men that use their Understandings must have more Sense, than they that use them not*. Very compendious truly! but out of too much precipitation he leaves his Syllogism in the lurch. He forgets to prove, That every man that *uses his Understanding* is (in the meaning of his Book) a *Free-thinker*. Without this, that same *Senseless* will still stick close upon him, and the closer for this very Syllogism. 'Tis mere Chicanery in the word: a *Free-thinker*, in this *self-evident* Pro-

* *Zosim. Pag. 155.* † *Pag. 118.* * *Pag. 120.*

position, is * *any man that uses his Understanding*, that is, that *thinks* at all: a very comprehensive Definition. And yet presently in the next Paragraph, a *Free-thinker* is but *One of a Thousand*, one that *departs from the sentiments of the Herd of Mankind*; that is, (for he could scarce have told it us in a plainer description) a mere *Atheist*, or at least *No Christian*. Are not these two Acceptations of the same word wonderfully consistent? Either let him profess plainly, that no Christian, no Man but an *Atheist*, this *One of a thousand*, *uses his Understanding*; or let him own that Himself has us'd none here; and that He and his Syllogism too have much of the *Senseless*.

Infamy and Wickedness, the second reproach, he thus repels from his Party: A *Free-thinker*, † who incurs the whole malice of the *Priests*, and is sure to have 999 of a thousand for his enemies, is oblig'd for his own sake IN THIS WORLD to be *virtuous and honest*. So that here, as far as this Argument goes, if the *Free-thinkers* are not wicked, it's only out of Fear and Restraint. A good hint, how *virtuous* they would be; if the *Growing Sect* should grow so numerous, as to promise themselves impunity, and face it out against infamy and scandal. If their *Honesty* by their own confession is owing to their Paucity; 'tis high time indeed to inquire into their numbers.

But (2dly) to commence a *Free-thinker*, * requires great Diligence and Application of mind; and he expells all vicious dispositions and passions by being never out of Action; and so we have another egregious Demonstration. But is this too to pass upon us for *Self-evident*? Are all *Busy* men *Virtuous*? And are all *Free-thinkers* *Busy*? I'll be responsible for neither of the Propositions. But the poor Writer seems to hint here tacitly for Himself, What great diligence, what appli-

* Pag. 120. † Pag. 120. * Pag. 121.

cation of mind he has us'd, to work himself into Atheism: how much more, to compose such an elaborate Book? how many merry Meetings, and kind Assignations has he balk'd, while he was gleaning his Bundle of Scraps? how many watchful nights, and abstemious days has he pass'd, in painful and dry drudgery; while you lazy * *Ecclesiastics*, he says, *were employ'd in the most innocent manner you can be, in mere eating and drinking?* And yet methinks you have done something else besides making good cheer: or else *Germany* would not be so full of your Praises, and our Libraries full of your Books; where such puny Performances as His, for all his *diligence* and *application*, will never deserve admission.

Well, but † (3dly) *by much Thinking* (here again we are trick'd for *Free-thinking*) *men comprehend the whole compass of Human Life; are convinc'd, that IN THIS LIFE Misery attends the practice of Vice, and Happiness that of Virtue; and that to live pleasantly, they must live virtuously.* A wonderful discovery indeed! and can no body comprehend this, but *Free-thinkers* and *Atheists*? Why, this is the most beaten Topic in all the Books and Sermons of your *Clergy*, That even in This life a Virtuous man, a good Christian, is the most happy of men; that God has forbid nothing beneficial and useful to us; that besides the Future promises and threats, Virtue carries here it's own reward, and Vice it's own punishment. So that if This notion is sufficient to make a Free-thinker *Virtuous*; much more will it operate upon *Christians*, when supported and enforc'd with a firm belief of another Life.

The Result then of his Arguments for a Free-thinker's *Virtue*, is this, That *he fears Evil in this World, That he's a man of Business and Application,*

* Pag. 114. † Pag. 121.

and loves *Pleasure in this Life*. This is all the Security he offers for his Honesty and Good Behaviour. By which he declares himself and his Clan to be mere *Atheists*, as much as if he had spoke it out. For, as you see, Immortality is quite out of their Scheme; and the Saying us'd here, *To live pleasantly, they must live virtuously*, is the very Axiom of *Epicurus*, * Οὐκ ἔστιν ἡδέως ζῆν, ἀνευ τῶ φρονίμως καλῶς καὶ δικαίως, 'Tis not possible to live pleasantly, without living wisely, honestly, and justly, and so vice versa. This is said indeed; but said by Him with so ill a grace, as to set folks a laughing. And our Author might have seen, how all the other Sects ridiculed this Magniloquence of *Epicurus*, as inconsistent with his whole Systeme; and prov'd by set and legitimate Treatises, that a true *Epicurean* could not live a Pleasant life, much less a Virtuous. And I dare say, were this Writer's soul known, and if he speaks true of his *Application of mind*; he finds no great *Pleasure* in his gloomy doctrine of utter Extinction.

But to leave that to his own Conscience; He is very odd and diverting, when to prove this *Epicurean* notion, he draws in two Passages of *Cicero*: † For *who*, says He, *lives pleasantly, except him who delights in his duty &c.* This is quoted out of the Fifth Paradox, where he argues in the *Stoical* Manner, *That the Wise man alone is Free, and every Fool a Slave: Quis enim vivit, ut vult, For who lives freely, as he list* (this our Writer translates pleasantly) *but he who delights in his duty &c.* that is in short, *but the Wiseman of the Stoics*? Now what a fetch and strein is here to draw this Character to the *Epicurean*? How decently it sits upon him? He might as justly apply to him all the Beatitudes in our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount.

* Κόγια δέξαι num. v. & Epistola ad Menoeceæ. † Pag. 121. sage

But he has a second Passage, *Offices I, 2.* * *Whoever places Happiness in any thing besides Virtue &c.* Another sagacious Application! Is this the man, that for four pages together insults the Clergy for misapplying Passages of † *Tully*? This in the *Offices* stands really thus: That great Author having determin'd to write a Book to his Son (whom he had then plac'd under a *Peripatetic* Master) *About the Duties of Civil Life*, declares in the Proëme what Philosophers he would follow. *Because there are some Sects*, says he, *that by (wrong) stating the Ends of Good and Evil pervert all Civil Duty, Friendship, Justice, Liberality, Fortitude, Temperance.* For he that separates the Chief Good from Virtue and Honesty, and measures it by his own Profit (if he's constant to his Principle, and is not sometimes overcome by Good Nature) can neither be Friendly, Just, nor Liberal: neither can he be Courageous, who declares Pain the greatest Evil; nor Temperate, who maintains Pleasure to be the greatest Good. These Sects, subjoins he, if they are consistent with themselves, can have nothing to say, *de Officio*, about Civil Duty. That Subject solely belongs to Stoics, Academics, and Peripatetics. Where it's manifest, the Sects he reflects on, are the Epicureans and Cyrenaics: and we have his plain declaration, That upon those Principles no man can live honestly and virtuously. And yet this inauspicious Gleaner, this new Revisor forsooth of *Cicero*, will needs wrest this very Passage to a commendation of *Epicurus's* and his own Rules of Morality. And pray observe, how gingerly he translates *Temperans*, moderate in the enjoyment of Pleasure. Whereas *Temperance*, according to *Tully*, in *praetermittendis & aspernandis voluptatibus cernitur*, consists in the neglecting and despising of Pleasure. If our Writer should be found a Popish Priest at last, I dare say he's a very easy and moderate Confessor.

* Pag. 122. † Pag. 137. &c.

XLV.

But he now leaves Arguments *a priori*, and proceeds to Historical Accounts, wherein he will shew, **That they who have been distinguish'd in all Ages for their Understanding and Virtue, have been Free-thinkers.* Such *Free-thinkers* as his Party are, or else all his labour is lost: and yet we shall find, that among his whole List there's scarce a Pair, that will come under that Character.

SOCRATES, his first Instance, *the divinest man of the Heathen World, was, as he says, a very great Free-thinker.* By what mark or token? Why, † *he disbeliev'd the Gods of his Country, and the common Creeds about them.* Allow that; though just before his death he made a Hymn to *Apollo*, and left a Sacrifice to *Aesculapius*: yet why is this Character so peculiar to *Socrates*? I'll help our Author to a Million of *Free-thinkers*, upon the very same reason. For *Constantine* himself, whom he abus'd before, and all the Pagan Converts to Christianity before Him and after, *disbeliev'd the (same) Gods of their Country, and the common Creeds about them.* Nay they far excell'd *Socrates* in their Free-thinking Quality: for He timorously **fell in with the reigning Superstition of his Country, and suffer'd it quietly to take its course*; but They heroically profess'd their true Sentiments; in spite of terrors and tortures, contemn'd, routed, and trampled down *the Gods of their Country*; till Pagan Superstition was quite extinct, and wash'd away with the blood of so many Martyrs. And why, pray, could not these deserve from our Writer the honorable name of *Free-thinkers*? The reason is manifest: The Christians were *Free-thinkers* at first,

* Pag. 123. † Ibid. * Ibid.

while

while they contradicted the Herd of mankind; but now Christianity is establish'd, they themselves are become the Herd: and consequently Free-thinking now consists in contradicting Them. Dare he deny this is his Notion? And that his Characteristic of Free-thinking is to oppose a great Majority? No matter, whether right or wrong, whether the Herd is in Truth or in Errour, Free-thinking must be Singularity. * *Unthinking, shallow Fellow!* For at this rate, if the *Growing Sect* should so spread, as to attain the name of the Herd; the only title then to Free-thinking would be to oppose the *Free-thinkers*.

Well, but Socrates † declar'd his dislike, when he heard men attribute Repentance, Anger, and other Passions to the Gods; and talk of Wars and Battels in Heaven, and of the Gods getting Women with child, and such like fabulous and blasphemous Stories. This is quoted by him out of Plato in *Euthyphrone*, as if they were that Author's own Words. And what a fine Scene am I entring upon? He to complain of mangling, forging, and corrupting Passages? And Himself here to forge so openly, on purpose to hook in some bold and saucy Blasphemy? Repentance and Anger attributed to the Gods: this glances aside at those frequent expressions of our Bible, *The wrath of the Lord*, and, *The Lord repented*. As if the whole Herd of Christians did not know; that these are not to be taken literally, but are spoken ἀνθρωποπαγῶς, in a human manner, accommodated to our capacities and affections: the nature of God being infinitely above all ruffles of Passion. And then Wars and Battles in Heaven: this is pointed against Revelations XII, 7; *And there was war in heaven; Michael and his Angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and His angels*. Now where has this Writer liv'd, or

* Pag. 104. † Pag. 123.

what

what *Idiot Evangelist* was he bred under; not to know that This is all Vision and Allegory, and not propos'd as literal truth. But his Mother perhaps, that gave him his first notions about *Bel and the Dragon*, might frighten too the naughty Boy with *Michael and the Dragon*. His last expression, of the *Gods getting Women with child*, without doubt was design'd by him as a Flout upon our Saviour's Incarnation.

But when we come to consult *Plato* himself, in the Passage alleg'd here; how do all this Writer's Insinuations vanish, and how does his own Impudence and Prevarication appear? The whole Passage is no more than this. *Socrates* discoursing with *Euthyphron* an *Haruspex*, who was bringing an Indictment for Murder against his own Father, ask'd him if he thought it just and pious to do so: 'Yes, says the other, it is right and pious to bring an offender to justice, though he be my Father; for so *Jove* bound his Father *Saturn* in Chains, for devouring his Children; and *Saturn* before had castrated His Father for some other Crime. I confess, replies *Socrates*, when I hear such things said of the Gods, * *I assent with some difficulty*: but do You think these things true? and that there are really Wars, and Enmities and Battles among the Gods, and many other such matters, as Poets and Painters represent? These are all true, says the other, and stranger things than these, which I could tell you. This is all that is there said on this head: and then *Socrates* proceeds in his disputation, upon the very Concession that these accounts of the Gods are true.

* Δυσχερὲς πῶς ἀποδέχομαι.

But

And hence first we may observe, that *Socrates* was not so free a Thinker, as our Writer represents him. For according to *Varro's* division of Religions into *Poetical, Civil, and Philosophical*; *tis the First here that *Socrates* with some difficulty assents to, or very tenderly denies: whereas the *Stoics* that came after him, treated openly that whole Poëtic System as *impious and superstitious*; * and these very Stories of *Saturn* and *Juppiter*, and of the Wars with *Titans* and *Giants*, and of Gods against Gods, as *wicked Fables, anile Superstitions, foolish and pernicious Errors*. But as to the *Civil Religion*; *Socrates* never oppos'd it, but always countenanc'd it both by discourse and example. His precept to his Scholars about matters of Worship, was to govern themselves νόμῳ πόλεως, by the Custom of the Country. He himself sacrific'd regularly and openly both at home and at the public Altars; he sent his Friends to consult the Oracle at *Delphi* upon all affairs of importance. How therefore will our Writer make out, † that he disbeliev'd the Gods of his Country? That indeed was the Indictment against him; Ἀδικεῖ Σωκράτης, ἐς ἣ πόλις νομίζει θεῶς, ὃ νομίζων: but he did not plead Guilty to it. And, though our Writer should now convict him; yet I am sure, his celebrated *Daemonium*, by whose admonition and impulse he guided all his affairs, sufficiently secures him from being listed and consociated with our modern *Free-thinkers*.

Another thing, we may observe from this Passage of *Plato*, is the unfairness and malignity of our Writer; who without the least hint from his Author has foisted in two Scoffs and Contumelies upon the Scripture. There's nothing said there of

* Cicero de Nat. Deor. 1, 24, 28. † Xenophon Memorab. lib. 1.

God's repentance and anger; not a word of Gods getting Women with Child: why then does he stubborn Plato, to speak what he never said? Why so great a Name to cover his own Impiety? *Mala mens, malus animus*: and from this Instance take the measure of our Writer's veracity.

But he will still press *Socrates* into the Service, and force him into his Regiment of Free-thinkers; * because he did not make Notions, or Speculations, or Mysteries, any parts of his Religion. No Mysteries? a wager with our Writer, that he was initiated in the Mysteries of *Ceres Eleusina*; and consequently had he liv'd in the present Age, would never have flouted Christianity for being *Mysterious*. But where's our Author's proof for this character of *Socrates*? Why, he demonstrated all men to be fools, who troubled themselves with inquiries into Heavenly things; and ask'd such Inquirers, whether they had attain'd a perfect knowledge of Human things, since they search'd into Heavenly? This the shrew'd Author gives, as a Translation from † *Xenophon*; and he proposes here Heavenly things, in the Christian Sense us'd by our Saviour and his Apostles. What shall I say, or what shall I not say? But I have spent already all my wonder and words too for this Writer's Stupidity. Can any thing be plainer, than that the τὰ ὑγάνια, the Heavenly things in that passage of *Xenophon* mean Celestial Bodies and Appearances, their Causes, Magnitudes, and Motions? These Physiological Inquiries, which had employ'd the former Philosophers, *Socrates* let alone; and first turn'd his Speculations to Morality and human Life. This is it, that *Xenophon* says there express; and it's eccho'd over and over in all antient * Authors. Let us

* Pag. 125. * Memor. lib. 1. * See Cicer. Acad. I, 4. Tusc. III, 4. & V, 4. Diogenes Laert. in Soc. and many more.
take

take now our Writer's Argument, and see how it concludes: *Because Socrates did not cultivate Astronomy, but Ethics; therefore he had no Mysteries in his Religion.* Because our Writer has cultivated no Science at all; *therefore he makes such silly Syllogisms, and Blunders abominable.*

XLVI.

To bring PLATO in among his *Free-thinkers*, our Writer is put hard to his shifts, and forc'd to make several doubles. He was not so free, * he owns, as *Socrates*; but alarm'd at His fate, kept himself more upon his guard, and never talk'd publicly against the Religion of his Country. This is arguing backwards, and gives him one remove Out of the List. But he brings him back with a fetch, *For he thought himself into notions, so contrary to those known in Greece, and so resembling Christianity; that as some Christians suspected He had read the Old Testament, so Celsus charges our Saviour with reading and borrowing from Him.* Allow this, and admire the consistency of our Writer's language and sentiments. The *Free-thinking* of Plato, by his present account of it, consisted solely in approaching to Christianity: but our modern Free-thinking lies wholly in receding from it, in a course retrograde to that of Plato. This Free-thinking is a mere *Empusa*; it changes shapes as fast as *Vertumnus*:

Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo?

But he goes on, and remarks, † *That Origen indeed very well defends our Blessed Lord from Celsus's Charge.* When you see the words *Very well*, and the complement of *Blessed Lord*; you are to expect from our Writer some smart piece of Burlesque.

* Pag. 126. † Pag. 127.

And here you have it; For Origen, says he, well replies, That Celsus deserves to be laugh'd at, when he affirms JESUS had read Plato: who was bred and born among the Jews; and was so far from having been taught Greek Letters, that he was not taught Hebrew Letters, as the Scriptures testify. You see, Origen's answer here is commended as very good; to insinuate with a sneer, that our Saviour was *Illiterate*. Contemptible Buffoon! Origen did not mean, he had no Letters, but that he did not acquire them in the vulgar way, by institution and industry. He was Θεοδιδάκλος, αὐτοδιδάκλος, taught of God, taught of Himself. Which made the Jews exclaim, who knew his Parentage and Education, * Πόθεν τὸ τοῦ ἡ σοφία αὐτῆ; Whence hath this man this wisdom? Need He to learn Languages under a Preceptor; who could give to his Disciples the Gift of all Languages? Need He be taught Wisdom by Plato, or Gamaliel; who was Essential Wisdom it self, ἡ σοφία καὶ ὁ λόγος Θεῶ;

But he has another Gird upon Christianity; † For Amelius a Heathen Platonist, upon the reading the first verses of St. JOHN the Evangelist, cried out, By Jove, this Barbarian is of our master Plato's opinion: where he imposes again on the English Reader with his Barbarian, as he did before with his Idiot Evangelist. For ὁ βάρβαρος in the Original has no notion in it of Contempt of the Person; but relates solely to the Country of Palestine, as out of the bounds of Greece. But, pray, where did our learned Writer find this odd and scurrile Turn of Amelius's words? The passage it self, Amelius's own Writing, is extant in * Eusebius, Theodoret, and Cyrill; which I

* Matt. XIII, 54. † Pag. 127. * Euseb. Praep. p. 540. Theod. Graec. Affect. p. 33. Cyrill. c. Julian. p. 283.

shall translate without either forging or mangling: And this (says *Amelius*) was ὁ λόγος the Word: by whom being himself eternal all things, that are, existed; as *Heraclitus* would maintain: and indeed whom the Barbarian affirms, having the place and dignity of the Beginning (or Principle), to be with God, and to be God; by whom all things intirely were made; in whom whatever was made hath it's Life and Being; who descending into Body, and putting on Flesh, took the form of Man; though even then he gave proof of the Majesty of his Nature: nay, and after his dissolution, was deified again; and is God, the same he was before he descended into Body and Flesh and Man. Is there any Air in all this of Banter or Contempt? Is it not the very contrary, of the most serious Assent and Approbation? Has he not paraphras'd the Evangelist's words in the best stile and manner? Ὑπεράγα) ἔ τι θαύμαζε, says *Theodorit*; *Amelius* venerates and admires the Proëme of St. John's Gospel: and perhaps it was He (though no worse, if it was Another Platonist) who said * It deserv'd to be writ in Letters of Gold, and set in the most conspicuous place in every Church. And who now is the Barbarian, but our Writer himself? The Platonist he brought to affront the Evangelist, is found an Adorer of him. I hope he'l learn in his next Performance, not to depend too much on second or fifth hand Citations.

Our Author seems sensible, that he drags *Plato* per force into the Club of *Free-thinkers*; as *Cacus* did his Oxen into his Cave by the Tails. For which hanging back and reluctancy *Plato* shall have a dash;

* Augustin. de Civ. Dei x, 29. Quod initium S. Evangelii, cui nomen est secundum Joannem, quidam Platonici aureis literis conscribendum & per omnes Ecclesias in locis eminentissimis proponendum esse dicebat.

and since he cannot make a good *Free-thinker* of him, he'l make him a Creed-maker: * *For several of his Notions became fundamental Articles of Christian Faith.* It really may be so: for the first Article of My faith is, *I believe in God, and that † He that cometh to God, must believe that he is; and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* And I persuade my self, that *Plato* and his Master, and many other Good men, before our Saviour's manifestation, had the very same Article. And I had rather have my Soul be with those, though they had not the light of the Gospel; than with such of our Moderns, as trample Pearls under their feet, and rend those that lay them before them. But I do not ow this Article to *Plato*, but to God the common Author of Nature, and Father of rational Light. When our Writer specifies more Articles, as borrow'd from *Plato*; your own Divines will take care of him, and do justice to Revelation.

Yes, * *but zealous Christians forg'd several things under Plato's name, with which they had great success in the Conversion of the Heathen World.* He's at his old Charge of Forgery, though it never succeeds in his hands. And what, pray you, did they forge? Why, *the Thirteenth Letter to Dionysius, printed in his Works.* But is this our Author's own Criticism? is it supported by any reasons, hammer'd on his own Anvil? Not the least pretense to those: but he refers to Dr. *Cudworth*, and the business is done. O wretched Gleaner of Weeds! Has he read that noble work, *The Intellectual System*, to no better purpose? One oversight, one error he culls out for his use; and passes over a thousand noble Truths, that might have made him a better Man, and no Writer.

* Pag. 128. † Heb. xi, 6. * Pag. 128.

The Doctor there says, * *It is supposititious and counterfeit by some zealous and ignorant Christian; as there is accordingly a Νοθεύεται or Brand of Bastardy prefix'd to it in all the Editions of Plato's works.* That's true indeed of the *Brand*; but he was a bold Ignorant that put it there. That Letter is as genuine as any of the rest; and was receiv'd in the List, before the Christian Name began. † *Laërtius* an *Epicurean*, who liv'd in *Antoninus Pius's* time, gives a Catalogue of them all; *Επιτολὰν τρισκαίδεκα*, says he, *Epistles Thirteen*: (and so *Suidas* in *Εὐπερίηεν*) but take this Branded one away, and there are but *Twelve*. Among these are *πρὸς Διονύσιον τέτταρες*, *Four*, says he, to *Dionysius*: remove this suspected one, and there remain but *Three*. In a word, all the present *Thirteen* answer exactly to his List both in Names and in Number; except a small various *Lection*, To *Aristodorus* the *Xth* Letter, whom He calls *Aristodemus*. And this alone is sufficient to clear the Christians of the pretended Forgery. For surely *Laërtius* could come at Copies of *Plato* 200 years old; since we now have them of 700 or more: and if the present *XIIIth* was there, it must be writ before Christ was born. But to go farther still: this Recension of *Plato's* works he gives not from Himself, but from *Thrasyllus*; who flourishing in the time of *Augustus* must needs be older than Christ. Nay he cites, without the least hint of diversity in the Number, another Recension by *Aristophanes Grammaticus*; who was a Writer 200 years before the Christian *Aera*. And now, if we look into the internal character of the Letter it self, it will have all the marks of Genuineness. 'Tis not some staple Common Place, as most of those forg'd by the

* Cudworth, p. 403. † In Platone, iii, 61.

Sophists are; but a Letter of Business, circumstantiated with great Variety of Things and Persons, all apt and proper to the Writer and to the Date. It was forg'd therefore by no body; much less by any *Christian*: who certainly would never have put Idolatry into a Letter, made (as our Writer says) for the Conversion of the Heathens. I have got you, says Plato there, a Statue of Apollo; and Leptines conveys it to you: it's made by a young and good Workman, whose name is Leochares: This was that Leochares, afterwards a most famous Statuary, celebrated by Pliny and Pausanias: and the Time hits exactly, for then he was Young. Which is as great a Mark, that the Letter is genuine; as it is a Demonstration, that no *Christian* forg'd it. And lastly, the Ground of this suspicion, a Passage yet extant in it and quoted by * Eusebius and Theodorit, is a weak and poor Pretense. As for the Symbol, says he, or private Mark you desire, to know my serious Letters and which contain my real Sentiments from those that do not so; know and remember, that *Τῆς μὲν σπουδαίας ὁμιλοῦς Θεὸς ἀρχεῖ, Θεοὶ δὲ τὸ ἕτερον*, GOD begins a serious Letter, and GODS one that's otherwise. This the Fathers (and not unjustly) made use of as some indication, that Plato really believ'd but One God.

Which notion your Learned Doctor not approving, as contrary (in his opinion) to the Platonic System, he decries the Letter as spurious. But this is no Consequence at all, whatsoever becomes of Plato's true Thoughts. The Symbol he here speaks of, made no part of the Letters, nor began the first Paragraph of them: for here's neither Θεὸς nor Θεοὶ in that manner in any one of the Thirteen. 'Twas extrinsic (if I mistake not) to the Letter, and was a Mark

* Euseb. Praep. p. 530. Theod. Affect. p. 27. at

at the top of it in these words, $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ Θεῶν, if it was a serious one; otherwise, $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ Θεοῖς. These two were the common Forms in the beginning of Writings or any Discourse of importance: and in their usage were equivalent and indifferent; Philosophers, as *Xenophon* and others, having it sometimes $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ Θεοῖς; and Poets, as *Euripides* and *Aristophanes*, $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ Θεῶν. So that *Plato* could not have chosen a Symbol fitter for his turn: being in neither way liable to any suspicion; nor any Inference to be drawn from it to discover his real opinion. And yet I am so much a friend to *Eusebius's* remark; that I would not wish *Plato* had made the Other choice, to put $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ Θεοῖς in his Solemn Letters, and $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ Θεῶν in his Slight ones.

Had our Writer carried his point in this instance of Forgery, could he have done any great Feats with it? Yes a mighty one indeed! he could have added one *Pious Fraud* more, to a hundred others that are detected ready to his hand. But, pray, who are the discoverers of them? The Christian Priests themselves: so far are they from concealing or propagating them, or thinking their Cause needs them. And I challenge Him and the whole Fraternity to shew One single one that They discover'd, and ow not to the Clergy? Even this mistaken one is pick'd from your *Cudworth*. Most able Masters of Stratagem! ever to hope to vanquish Religion by Arms borrow'd from the Priests? They may be sure, there's no danger of the strong Town's being taken; while the Garrison within can afford to lend the Besiegers Powder.

So far are the modern Christians from protecting old Forgeries; that they are too ready to cry *Spirious* without ground or occasion. As not only this

XIIIth by Dr. Cudworth, and before him by *Aldobrandinus*; but another Letter of *Plato's* is call'd in question by *Menagius*. * *There are Thirteen Letters extant*, says he; *among which One to Erastus and Coriscus, quoted by Clemens and Origen, is now wanting: but it seems to have been Spurious, and forg'd by the Christians.* Now all this is mere dream and delusion. That very Letter is expressly nam'd by *Laërtius*, Πρὸς Ἑρμείαν καὶ Ἐραστον καὶ Κορίσκον μία, *One*, says he, *to Hermias and Erastus and Coriscus*; and it's the VIth of the present Set of Thirteen; and the Passages thence cited by *Origen, Clemens, and Theodoret* too, are extant there exactly; and there's nothing in't for the Christian Cause, but what may be prov'd as strongly from several other places of *Plato's* undoubted Works. But what mischief have I been doing? I have prevented our *Free-thinker*: who, after he had dabbled by chance in *Menagius*, might have flourish'd with a new Forgery, and magisterially preach'd it to his credulous Crew.

XLVII.

ARISTOTLE, the next in the *Free-thinking* Row, makes a very short appearance there, and goes quickly off the Stage. His Title hangs by two slender Threads, First, † *That he furnish'd Articles of Faith to the Popish Church, as Plato did to the Primitive.* Now I had thought, that *Creed-making* and *Free-thinking* (even allowing the Charge to be true) had been words of a disparate Sense, that look'd askew at each other: and how both of them come to fit so amicably upon *Aristotle*, surpasses my comprehension. But the matter is no more than this: As the *Primitive Christians* in their disputes with the

* Aldobrand. & Menag. ad Laërtium III, 61. † P. 128.

Pagans made great use of the *Platonic* Philosophy; not to coin Articles, but to explain them, and to refell the Adversaries objections: so the School-men in the Popish times had recourse to the *Peripatetic*, the sole Systeme then in Vogue. And yet These did not *make* Articles from it: our Author's weak, if he thinks so: neither did *Palavicino* so mean it. The pèculiar Doctrines of that Church came from Politics, not Metaphysics; not from the Chairs of Professors, but from the Offices of the Roman Court. And the School-men were their Drudges, in racking *Aristotle* and their own Brains to guild and palliate such gainful Fictions; and to reconcile them, if possible, to Common Sense, which ever hated and spurn'd them.

The Second Title *Aristotle* holds by, is a charge of * *Impiety*; which I must own promises well, if it could be made good: for That Word and *Free-thinking* are very closely combined, both by Affinity and old Acquaintance. *He was forc'd*, says he, *to steal privately out of Athens to Chalcis; because Eury-medon a Priest accus'd him of Impiety, for introducing some Philosophical Assertions contrary to the Religion of the Athenians.* The Voucher he brings for this is *Diogenes Laërtius*: but under his old fatality of blundering he summons a wrong witness. *Origen* indeed says something to his purpose, That he was impeach'd *Διά τινα δόγματα ἢ φιλοσοφίας αὐτοῦ*, for some Doctrines of his Philosophy. But *Laërtius* and *Athenaeus* lay the Indictment quite otherwise; For *Impiety*, in writing and daily singing a Paean (a sort of Hymn peculiar and sacred to the Gods) to the Memory of his Patron *Hérmias*, Tyrant of *Atarna*, an Eunuch and at first a Slave. This short Poem, in the Dithyrambic Stile, is yet extant in both those Authors:

* Pag. 128.

Ἀρετὰ πολύμοχθε,
Γένει βροτείῳ
Θήγμα κάλλιστον βίῳ, &c.

So the words are to be read and pointed. Neither is there any doubt, but this was the sole Charge which that Sycophant brought against him: for if he had impeach'd his Doctrines, there had been no need of this Stale business; which was then of xx years standing, the death of *Hermias* happening in *Aristotle's* XLth year, and this Accusation in his LXth. So that Another of our Writer's List is like to give him the Slip: for the Impeachment, we see, was not against the Philosopher, but the Poet; not for *Free-thinking*, but the reverse of it *Superstition*; for deifying a Mortal Man, not for ungoding the Deities.

XLVIII.

But he's now come to *EPICURUS*, * a man distinguish'd in all Ages as a great Free-thinker; and I do not design to rob our Growing Sect of the honour of so great a Founder. He's allow'd to stand firm in the List, in the right modern Acceptation of the word. But when our Writer commends his *Virtues towards his Parents, Brethren, Servants; Humanity to all, Love to his Country, Chastity, Temperance, and Frugality*; he ought to reflect that he takes the character from *Laërtius*, a domestic Witness, and one of the Sect; and consequently of little Credit where he speaks for his Master. I could draw a Picture of *Epicurus* in features and colours quite contrary; and bring many old Witnesses, who knew and saw him, to vouch for it's Likeness. But

* Pag. 129.

these things are trite and common among men of true Letters: and our Author and his Pamphlet are too contemptible, to require Common Places in answer.

But the *Noble Quality* of all, the most divine of His and all Virtues was his Friendship; so cultivated in perfection by Him and his Followers, that the Succession of His School lasted many hundred years, after all the others had fail'd. This last part is true in the Author from whom it's taken; but our Gleaner here misunderstands it. The Succession indeed continued at Athens, in the Garden dedicated to it; longer than the other Sects possess'd their first Stations. But it's utterly false, that Professors of it lasted longer in general, than those of the others. Quite contrary: 'tis well known that the *Platonists*, *Peripatetics*, and *Stoics*, or rather a Jumble and Compound of them all, subsisted long after the Empire was Christian: when there was no School, no Footstep of the *Epicureans* left in the World.

But how does our Writer prove, that this *noble Quality*, *Friendship*, was so eminently cultivated by *Epicurus*? Why, *Cicero*, says he, though otherwise a great Adversary to his Philosophical Opinions, gives him this noble Testimony. I confess, it raises my scorn and indignation at this mushroom Scribler; to see him by and by with an air of superiority prescribing to the whole Body of your Clergy, the true method of quoting *Cicero*. They consider not, says he, he writes in *Dialogue*; but quote any thing that fits their purpose, as *Cicero's* opinion, without attending to the Person that speaks it: * *Any false Argument, which he makes the Stoic or Epicurean use, and which they have thought fit to sanctify, they urge it as Cicero's Own.* Out of his own Mouth, this pert Teacher of his Betters:

ἄλλων ἰατρὸς, αὐτὸς ἔλκεσι βρύων.

For this very *noble Testimony*, which *He urges* here as *Cicero's* own, comes from the mouth of **Torquatus* an *Epicurean*: and is afterwards refuted by *Cicero* in his own name and person. Nay so purblind and stupid was our Writer, as not to attend to the Beginning of his own Passage, which he ushers in thus dock'd and curtal'd: *Epicurus ita dicit &c.* *Epicurus declares it to be his Opinion, that Friendship is the noblest, most extensive, and most delicious pleasure.* Whereas in *Torquatus* it lies thus: † *The remaining Head to be spoke to is FRIENDSHIP; which, if Pleasure be declar'd the Chief Good, You affirm will be all gone and extinct: de qua Epicurus quidem ita dicit, concerning which Epicurus declares his opinion &c.* Where it's manifest, that *Affirmatis, You affirm*, is spoken of and to *Cicero*. So that here's an *Epicurean Testimony*, of small credit in their own case, though our Writer *has thought fit to sanctify it*, slur'd upon us for *Cicero's*; and where the very *Epicurean* declares, that *Cicero* was of a contrary Opinion.

That an *Epicurean*, who professes to cultivate Friendship for no other end than his own Profit and Pleasure, could not upon that principle be a true and real FRIEND, was the general affirmation of all the Sects besides. *Cicero* an *Academic* is constant in this Charge; as in the * II Book *De Finibus*, where he answers this passage of *Torquatus*; in *Offices* I, 2, cited here above, and in III, 33. *De Amicitia*, c. 13. *Academ.* II, 46. *De Nat. Deorum* I, 44. 'Tis true, he does acknowledg that several of that Sect were his Own good friends, and men of Virtue and Ho-

* De Fin. I, 20. † De amicitia, quam, si Voluptas summum sit bonum, affirmatis nullam ompino fore. * De Fin. II, 24, 25, 26.

nour: but then he declares he imputed this, *Naturae non Disciplinae, to their Good Nature and not their Doctrine*; their Lives being better than their Principles. I could add numbers of *Greeks* concurring in this accusation: but I'll content my self with *Plutarch*; whom our Writer so extolls for his *Learning* and *Virtue*, and places among his *Free-thinkers*. He impeaches the *Epicurean* notions, as destructive not of * *Friendship* only, but of *Natural Affection*. Nay he summs up their common Character in a few comprehensive words, Αφιλία, ἀπεραξία, ἀφιότης, ἡδυπάθεια, ὀλιγωρία, † *Unfriendliness, Unactiveness, Ungodliness, Voluptuousness, Unconcern'dness*: These *Qualities*, says he, *all Mankind, besides Themselves, think inherent in that Sect*. And what's like to become now of his Hero's noble *Quality*? Which of the *Free-thinkers* must we believe? Our Writer has muster'd them together, as if they were all of one side: but when they're turn'd loose into the Pit; they play exactly the same game, as the famous *Irish* man's Cocks did.

But see the Sneer, for the sake of which this *Epicurean Friendship* was introduc'd by him: * *We Christians*, says he, *ought still to have a higher Veneration for Epicurus; because even our Holy Religion it self does not any where particularly require of us such a high degree of Virtue*. So that we are to supply and perfect the Gospel Moral out of an Atheistical System; and *Christ* is to go to *Epicurus*, as to the superior *Rabbi*. Impudent, and dully profane! In the Old Testament *Friendship* is celebrated both by excellent Precepts and eminent Examples: but there was no occasion to do it in the New. That Qua-

* *Plutarch contra Coloten p. 2037, 2041, 2058.* † *Idem, p. 2018.* * *Pag. 129.*

lity is so exalted and expanded there, that it loses it's very name, and for Φιλία *Friendship* becomes Φιλadelphία and Αγάπη, *Brotherly Love* and *Charity*. Friendship in the Pagan Notion was * *inter duos aut inter paucos, circumscrib'd within Two persons or a Few*: whence *Aristotle's* Saying was applauded, ὁ ἔστι φίλος, ἔστι φίλος, *He that has Friends, has no Friend*: But Christian Friendship or Charity, in the same degree of Affection, is extended to the whole *Household of Faith*; and, in true Good will and Beneficence, to all the race of Mankind. Not that particular Friendships, arising from Familiarity, and Similitude of Humors, Studies, and Interests, are forbid or discourag'd in the Gospel: but there needed no Precept to appoint and *require*, what Nature it self and Human life and mutual Utility sufficiently prompt us to. A Bridle was more necessary than a Spur for these Partial Friendships; where the straight Rule of Moral is often bent and warp'd awry, to comply with Interest and Injustice under a specious Name: as many of the most magnified Instances sufficiently shew. But I'm insensibly here become a Preacher; and invade a Province, which You Clergy-men, and the *English* of all others, can much better adorn.

XLIX.

Before I proceed to the Next in his Row, I shall make a general Remark on our Writer's Judgment and Conduct. He has brought the Authors of three Sects; *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and, with the greatest mark of approbation, *Epicurus*. Pray, how came he to drop the Others? *Aristippus* the *Cyrenaic* cried

* Cicero de Amic. cap. v.

up *Pleasure*, as much as that *Gargettian* did; had Strumpets for his Mistresses and She-disciples, as well as He; and well deserv'd the honour of being in the List. Even *Diogenes* the Cynic would have made a laudable *Free-thinker*, for that single Assertion, *That Marriage was Nothing but an empty Name*; and * *He that could persuade, might lie with any Woman that could be persuaded*. Nay even *Zeno* himself, the Father of *Stoicism*, as gruff as he look'd, might have enlarg'd our Writer's Catalogue, for some very *Free-Thoughts* about the Indifferency of things; † *That all Women ought to be common, That no Words are to be reckon'd Obscene, That the Secret Parts need no Covering, That Incest and Sodomy have no real Crime nor Turpitude*. Where was our Author's Reading, when he omitted such illustrious Examples, that might have grac'd and dignified his List, full as much as *Epicurus*?

The Remainder of his Role are not Founders, but Followers of the several Sects. But be they One or the Other, Masters or Scholars; what shallowness, what want of Thought in our Writer, to impose and press these upon Us for our imitation in *Free-Thinking*? Many of his Blunders are special, and reach no further than a Paragraph: but here his Stupidity is total; and in the whole Compass and last Tendency of his Passages he's as blind as a Mole. The great Outcry against the Church, which is always in his mouth, is Imposing a Systeme of Opinions, to be swallow'd in the gross, without liberty of examining or dissenting. Allow it: though even This is false, the Impos'd Opinions being few and true and plain; and a large Field left open for freedom and latitude of Thought: as his own Book attests, which is mostly spent in collecting the vari-

* *Tis not only of morality contrary. Laërt.* † *Sextus Empir.*

thing to any *Free-thinking Purpose whatever.*

The design of *Plutarch* is to shew the deplorable misery of Superstition, when it is in Extremity; when a man imagins the Gods, under the same Idea we now do the Devils; when he fancies them * *ἐμπλήκεις, ἀπίστεις, εὐμεταβόλους, πτωχολίκεις, ὠμὰς, μικρολύπτας, mad, faithless, fickle, revengeful, cruel, and disgusted at the smallest things; when he figures Diana, Apollo, Juno, Venus, as acting under the most frantic and raving Distractions; when he approaches trembling to the Temples, as if they were the dens of Bears, Dragons, or Sea Monsters.* When Superstition, says he, is arriv'd to this pitch, it's more intolerable than Atheism it self; nay it produces Atheism, both in Others that see them, and in Themselves, if they can emerge to it. For when Fools fly from Superstition, they run into Atheism the other Extreme, † *ὑπερπηδήσαντες ἐν μέσῳ κειμένην τὴν Εὐσέβειαν,* skipping over Right Religion that lies in the Middle. This is the Sum of *Plutarch's* Book: and what's all this to our Writer's design? Superstition under this Character, is not possible to be found in Christianity; it can be no where but under Pagan and Poëtical Theology. In other * Places the same Author scourges Atheism as severely, as Superstition here: nay he prefers a moderate Superstition infinitely before it. But those Passages are to be drop'd; and this out of so many Volumes is singled out as a Flower: which yet serves to no better end, than to shew our Writer understands neither the Language nor the Sense.

Superstition, says he, (by † way of insertion) *by which the Greeks meant The Fear of God, and which Theophrastus in his Characters expressly defines*

* *Plut. p. 296. 295.* † *Ibid. 299.* * *Contra Colotem, &c alibi.* † *Pag. 132.*

so. Not a syllable of this true. The Greeks meant not absolutely *Fear*, but an *erroneous and vitious Fear*: and *Theophrastus* defines it, not *δέος Fear*, but *δειλία*, a *vain Fearfulness*. And so *Cotta* in *Tully*, where he blames such as our Writer, * *who not only root Superstition up, in qua est INANIS TIMOR Deorum*, which is a *VAIN FEAR* of the Gods, but *Religion* too, which consists in the *Pious Worship* of them. Nor does the Verse of *Horace*, quoted by him in the Margin,

Quone malo mentem concussa? timore deorum,
proves his assertion. For there *Malo*, which precedes, communicates it's signification to *Timore*; as if he had said plenary, *malo timore*, a *wrong and vitious Fear*. The same Poët, *Odes I, 35*,

Unde manum juvenus

METU DEORUM continuit? quibus

Pepercit aris?

without doubt means *Religion*, and not *Superstition*: and so does *Terence* in *Hecyra*:

Nec pol istae METUUNT DEOS, neque has respicere deos opinor.

But there are other Strokes in the Version it self, that shew his Faithfulness and Ability. † *But of all Fears*, says he, *none confounds a man like the Religionary Fear*. — Here on purpose he leaves his Guide, the last *English* Translator, who has it, *The vain Religionary*: and the Original, *Φόβος ὁ τῆς δεισιδαιμονίας*, the *Fear arising from Superstition*. He will fix a calumny on *Religion* and the *Fear of God*, in spite of his Author.

His Justness of thought is conspicuous in his Version of this Period: * *Even Slaves forget their Masters in their Sleep: Sleep lightens the Irons of the Fetter'd: their angry Sores, mortified Grangrenes, and pinching Pains allow them some intermission at night: but Superstition*

* *Nat. Deor. I, 42.* † *Pag. 132.* * *Pag. 133.*

will give no truce at night. If *Plutarch* had writ no better in the Original; he would scarce have been now the most known of all the *Antients*; but long ago had been forgot. Mind the absurdity: THEIR *angry Sores*, that is, of the *Fetter'd*: as if all Captives or Criminals or Slaves in Chains *must needs* be full of Sores and Ulcers? And then *Mortified Gangrenes* allow some *intermission* of Pain. If he had consulted Physicians; he might have known, that *mortified* parts can give no pain at all, and consequently have no *intermission*. And lastly, *Sores and Pains* allow *intermission* AT NIGHT: False; for Night is the periodical time of aggravation of Pains. But! *Superstition* will give no truce AT NIGHT. Is that such a wonder? even less truce than in the day; for darkness and solitude increase the Fears. What a series of Nonsense has he father'd upon *Plutarch*? Of which nothing appears in the Greek; neither *Their Sores*, nor *Mortified Gangrenes*, nor *At nights*. I'll translate the passage word for word: *Sleep lightens the Irons of the Fetter'd: Inflammations of Wounds, Cancerous corrosions of the Flesh, and all the most raging Pains dismiss men, while they sleep: Superstition alone gives no truce nor cessation even in Sleep.* If this is not unworthy of *Plutarch*; the other certainly becomes none but our Writer and his Company.

But now comes a signal Instance of the Lightness of his Hand, and the Heaviness of his Head. In the middle of his long Citation, p. 133, after the words *At noon-day*, he drops the period which immediately follows in the Original; and transfers it into his 134th page, as if it was quoted from another Place, and belong'd to another Head. Why this Legerdemain? Why this mangling and luxation of Passages? The Reason's apparent: for *Plutarch's* own words, as they were represented in the Last
English

English Version, not serving his turn; he quotes the place as it's translated, forsooth in the *Characteristics*, a Book writ by an Anonymous, but whoever he is, a very whimsical and conceited Author.

* *O wretched Grecians* (so that Author render's *Plutarch*) who bring into Religion that frightful Mien of sordid and vilifying Devotion, ill favour'd Humiliation and Contrition, abject Looks and Countenances, Conster-nations, Prostrations, Disfigurations; and in the Act of Worship, Distortions, constrain'd and painful postures of the Body, wry Faces, beggarly Tones, Mumpings, Grimaces, Cringings, and the rest of this Kind. Thus far that nameless Opiniate: and our worthy Writer introduces it with a grave Air, † *That Plutarch thus satirizes the public Forms of Devotion; which yet are such, as in almost all Countries pass for the true Worship of God.* This would partly be true, if those were really the words of *Plutarch*: but as not one syllable of them is found there, what must we think of this couple of Corruptors and Forgerers? There's nothing in all this, but their own *Disfigurations* and *Distortions* of the Original; their own *Mumpings*, and *Beggarly Tones*, while they pretend to speak in *Plutarch's* voice.

Plutarch having observ'd, *That Superstition alone allows no ease nor intermission even in Sleep;* for their Dreams, adds he, do as much torment them then, as their waking thoughts did before. And then they seek for expiations of those Visions nocturnal; Charms, Sulfurations, Dippings in the Sea, Sittings all day on the ground.

* *O Greeks, Inventors of Barbarian Ills,*

* Pag. 134. † *Ibid.*

* Ω βάρβαρ' ἐξηρόντες Ἕλληνας κακὰ, τῇ δαισδαίμονι, πηλώσεις, καλὰ ἑσπερώσεις, βαπτισμῶς, ρίψης ἐπὶ ὕδατι, αἰχρῶς περικαλίστης, ἀλλοτρίας ἀποσκευῆς.*

whose

whose Superstition has devis'd Rowlings in the Mire, and in the Kennels, Dippings in the Sea, Grovelings and Throwings upon the Face, deformed Sitings on the Earth, absurd and uncouth Adorations. This is a verbal Interpretation of that Place; except that for Σαββαλισμός, *Sabbatisms*, I have emended it Βαπτισμός, *Dippings*: and this, If I mistake not, for very good Reasons. Neither Σαββαλισμός, nor Σαββαλίζω is any where else heard of: and *Sabbata* being deriv'd and borrowed from the *Jews*; it's inconsistent with Εξευρόντες, *Greeks Inventors* of such Evils, that are more worthy of *Barbarians*. But, what weighs most, the Author here describes the most painful and sorrowful Instances of Superstition: but the *Sabbata* was a joyful Festival, made up of Ease, Finery, and good Cheer. This is certain from the *Jewish Rituals*, which exact that the very Poorest should wear their best Garments, and eat Three Meals every Sabbath. And that *Plutarch* knew this, appears from his *Symposiacs*, IV, 5. where he says, *The Jews honour the Sabbath, if possible by * drinking and carousing together, or, if that cannot be done, some Wine at least must be tasted*: and from this very Tract, p. 294. where he tells, *That the Jews once suffer'd their Walls to be taken by the Enemy's, without stirring to oppose them, Σαββάτων ὄντων ἐν ἀγνάπτοις κατεζόμενοι, but sitting still, because it was Sabbath, in their New Cloths, (never sent to the Fuller)*: which your last English Version absurdly translates, *Sitting on their Tails*. From the whole I suppose it's plain, that *Plutarch* would not mix a Rite, which he knew to be Joyful, with those other Ceremonies the most mournful and desponding. But then Βαπτισμός, *Dippings* in Rivers or Sea, exactly suits with the rest: both Word and

* Πίνει & οἰνίζει.

Thing being immemorially known in *Greece*, and the most frequent way of Expiation with melancholy and dejected Bigots. Whence he himself has it a little before, *Βάπλισον σεαυτὸν εἰς θάλασσαν*, * *Dip your self in the Sea*: and that Verse of *Euripides* became proverbial;

Θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τὰνθρώπων κακά:

The Sea does expiate all mortal Ills.

And now I dare ask the Reader; If he has seen a more flagrant Instance of Unfaithfulness and Forgery, than This of our two Writers. *Humiliation and Contrition*, known Words in your *English Liturgy*, are to be traduc'd here under *Plutarch's* name. Where do Those and their other Phrases appear in the Original? Or where do the Rites, He really speaks of, appear in your *Form of Worship*? Who among You rowl themselves in Mire, or wallow in Kennels? A Ceremony, fit only to be injoin'd to such crackbrain'd and scandalous Writers.

LI.

He's got now to his *Latin* Free-thinkers, and the Leader of them is VARRO, † the most Learned of all the Romans. Now Varro being a known Follower of the Old Academy, ** *Veteris Academiae Sectator*, that is, a true Platonist; we know all his System of Theology at once: and he cannot be call'd a Free-thinker, in either of the Senses that our Writer plays and shuffles with. Not an Atheist; because the Platonic Notions had †† a great Conformity with Christianity: not a free Reasoner or Innovator; because being adductus & juratus, ingaged and sworn to a Sect

* Pag. 288. † Pag. 134. ** Cic. Acad. I, 2. August. de Civ. Dei VI, 2. VII, 17. XIX, 1, 3, 4. †† Pag. 127.

in the lump, he can scarce arrive to the name and dignity of one of our Writer's *Half-Thinkers*.

Varro, who had made more Reserches into the Antiquities of Italy, than any man before him, publish'd two large and voluminous Books, long ago lost, which he call'd *Antiquitates Rerum Humanarum & Divinarum*. In the latter of these, *About Divine Affairs*, the short Remains of which are chiefly preserv'd in St. *Austin De Civitate Dei*, he distributed Theology into Poëtical or Fabulous, Philosophical or Physical, and Civil. *Mythicon*, * says he, appellatur, quo maxime utuntur Poëtae; *Physicon*, quo Philosophi; *Civile*, quo populi. *Primum, quod dixi, in eo sunt multa contra dignitatem & naturam Immortalium ficta. In hoc enim est, ut deus alius ex capite, alius ex femore sit, alius ex guttis sanguinis natus: in hoc, ut Dii furati sint, ut adulteraverint, ut serviverint homini. Denique in hoc omnia diis attribuuntur; quae non modo in hominem, sed etiam quae in contemtissimum hominem cadere possunt. In the FIRST*, says he, *are contain'd many fables, contrary to the dignity and nature of Immortal Beings; that one God should be born out of a Head (Minerva) another out of a Thigh (Bacchus) another from drops of Blood (Venus, Furies); that Gods were Thieves (Mercury) were Adulterers (Juppiter) were Slaves to a Man (Apollo); any thing in short, that may be said not only of a Man, but of the most despicable of Men.* This Passage our learned Writer cites, and ushers it in thus: Varro, the most learned of all the Romans, speaking of THEIR Theology, says: How of Their's, that is, the Civil; when he expressly says it of the Mythic or Poëtical? Was this downright Dulness in our Writer, or has it a mixture of Trick and Knavery? It's very plain, both in that Chapter of St. *Austin*, and in many other Places

* August. de Civ. Dei. VI, 5.

of that excellent Work, That *Varro* with great freedom censur'd the *Poetical* Theology; as all Sects whatever did, particularly the * *Stoics*: but the *Civil* or the *Roman* he was so far from condemning, that he encourag'd and multiplied it. He counted that Performance, † a great Benefit to his Country-men, both in showing them the Gods they were to worship, and what Power and Office every God had; and ** in many places religiously exhorted them to the worship of those Gods: many uncouth Names of which he rais'd out of oblivion; assign'd to the most sordid offices of low and servile Life. And I verily believe, neither *Cicero*, nor any one Gentleman of that time, knew half of those Gods; till *Varro* brought them to light out of the obscure Superstitions of mean Artificers and Rustics. Where then was our Writer's Judgment, to list *Varro* among his *Free-thinkers*? but his Learning too is as much display'd in his accurate Version. That period above, *Ut deus alius ex capite*, &c. he renders thus: *As Gods begotten and proceeding from other Gods Heads, Legs, Thighs, and Blood.* Why, in the name of *Priscian*, is *alius ex capite*, out of other Gods Heads? 'Tis manifest the illiterate Scribler for *alius* read it *alins* in the Genitive. And why forsooth must he add *Legs*, and pin his own Ignorance on his Author? Does any Fable in the Poëtic System make a God born out of a *Leg*? And why must plain *Natus* in the *Latin* be transmuted into *Begotten and proceeding*? for the pleasure of a silly Fling at the *Nicene* and *Athanasian* Creeds? Surely such a series of Profaneness, Ignorance, and Nonsense could never procede from any *Head* but such a one as His is.

* See Remark XLV. pag. 33. † August. IV, 22. ** *Ibid.* 31. *Varro ad deos colendos multis locis velut religiosus hortatur.*

But he has another Passage from *Varro* (recorded too by *St. Austin*) where * *de Religionibus loquens*, speaking of Religious Institutions, he says, *Multa esse VERA, quae non modo vulgo scire non sit utile; sed etiam tametsi falsa sint, aliter existimare populum expediat: & ideo Graecos Teletas & Mysteria taciturnitate parietibusque clausisse*: That many things are TRUE, which are not only not fit for the *Vulgar* to know; but even if they should be False, it's fit the *Vulgar* should think otherwise: and that therefore the *Greeks* kept their Initiations and Mysteries in Secrecy and within private Walls. This Passage our Writer proposes, as a *Discovery* of *Varro's* Free-thinking. Now I should have thought it the very Reverse. For first he says, *The things are TRUE*: that's contrary, no doubt, to our Writer's *Free-thinking*: and then, *That though they should be FALSE* (not that he says, they are false) the People ought not to know it: that's flat and plain *Priestcraft*, our Writer's Hate and Aversion. How comes it then, that so sagacious a Person is enamor'd of this Passage? Why truly, as he has manag'd it, it will serve and bend to his purpose. For the Period *Multa esse vera*, *That many things are TRUE*, he has translated, *Many things FALSE in Religion*. What? *Vera*, *False*? Non, an Affirmative? 'Tis time for your *Governors de les petites Maisons* to take care of such a Scribler. But, besides his tricks in the Version, he shews his flight of hand upon the Original. For instead of, *Sed etiam tametsi falsa sint*, he exhibits it, *Et quaedam tametsi falsa sint*; and so makes *Varro* say positively, *That somethings are false*. Now, what † foundation for this in any *Manuscript* or printed Copy whatsoever? Is this his Honesty in Citations? Is this He, that upbraids others with *corrupting* and *misapplying* of Passages?

* Aug. IV, 31. † Pag. 93.

Yes;

Yes; but *St. Austin*, after he had recited this Passage, subjoins his own Remark; *Hic certe totum consilium prodidit velut sapientium, per quos civitates & populi regerentur: Here Varro*, says he, *has discover'd* (unawares or by an obscure hint) *the whole Design, as of Wise Statesmen, by whom Societies were to be govern'd.* This place our * Author has borrow'd; but he might have produc'd more from the same Father; where he presses hard upon *Varro*, for glozing and soothing the *Civil Religion* contrary to his own Sentiments and Conscience: since he owns, that if he had † founded a new Community, he would have settled the Public Worship, more ex Naturae formula, according to the model of Nature; but now he was to explain it, as he found it establish'd. But of what use is this to our Author? If there's any relish of *Free-thinking* in't, it belongs to *St. Austin*, and not to *Varro*. The Christian Father speaks home, and condemns the *Civil Theology* equally with the *Pœtical*: but the Learned Pagan, being himself a Minister of State, and fearful of giving Offense (at that time especially, when the *Greek Philosophy* had not yet been made popular in the *Latin Tongue*) us'd great reserve and dissimulation: and though in many parts he corrected the publick Superstition, in the main he fix'd and promoted it. Not that he was himself Superstitious; for in that very work he hints his own Sentiments, though occultly and by the by: he declares, ** that for above 170 years, the old *Romans* worship'd the Gods without any Images: which *Manner*, says he, if it had still continued, the Gods would be adored with more purity and holiness: and for This he cites the *Jewish Nation*, as a witness and example: and concludes with a declaration,

* Pag. 135. † August. IV, 3. V, 4. ** August. IV, 31. Quod si adhuc mansisset, castius dii observarentur.

That

That they who first instituted Statues of the Gods, & *metum populis demsisse & errorem addidisse*, both took away the Fear of the Gods from the people, and gave them Erroneous Notions of them: where note again by the way, that *Metus* is Religion, and not Superstition. And in other of his Writings, he on all occasions detected the Artifices of knavish Impostors: as in that * at *Falisci* near *Rome*, where a few Families call'd *Hirpi*, pretended to have the Gift of walking bare-foot upon burning Cinders without being sing'd, at an annual Sacrifice to *Apollo*: which *Virgil* magnificently expresses, *Aen. XI, 786*.

*Cui pinens ardor acervo
Pascitur, & medium freti pietate per ignem
Cultores multa premimus vestigia pruna.*

On which place *Servius* the ancient Scholiast remarks; That *Virgil* indeed says it was a Miracle; but *Varro*, who is every where an Overthrower of Religion, says their Feet were medicated and secur'd by an Ointment. How would our Writer have flourish'd, if in his desultory Gleanings he had met with this Passage, *Varro ubique expugnator religionis*? He would have flighted *St. Austin*, and adhered solely to the *Grammarian*, for proving *Varro* a Free-thinker. And yet upon the very same foot, he must take *St. Austin* too into his List, and every particular Christian, that liv'd in the times of Paganism. For as *Servius* here by *Religio* means the *Vulgar, Popular, Civil Religion*; the Christians were in a compleat sense, both in Notion and Fact, *Expugnatores, the Overthrowers* of such Religion. And how little then is all this to our silly Writer's purpose? The more *Varro's* and Great Men he quotes for disbelieving Pagan Idolatry; the more Justice he does to Gospel Truth, and the more Reason to the Christian Establishment.

* *Plin. Hist. VII, 2.*

LII.

The next, that enters the Scene, though he speaks but one Sentence, is *the Grave and Wise CATO the Cenſor, who will for ever live in that noble Free-thinking Saying, recorded by Cicero; which ſhews that he underſtood the whole Myſtery of the Roman Religion as by Law Eſtabliſh'd: I wonder, ſaid he, how one of Our Priests can forbear laughing, when he ſees another. Very ſhort, you ſee, but very pithy: and our Writer thought he made a moſt capital Jeſt and ſpiteful Inſinuation, when he ſaid *The Roman Religion as by Law Eſtabliſh'd*. 'Tis eaſy to know what he alludes to: but by that time I have done this Remark and the reſt, his own Ignorance and Stupidity will be ſo dragd into the Light; that I my ſelf ſhall hereafter wonder, *If any of Your Priests can forbear laughing, when he ſees a Free-thinker.*

CATO the Elder, *homo antiqua virtute & fide*, a true old Roman, as his Country-men were before the Grecian Literature got ſettlement among them, liv'd and died a *Prieſt* himſelf, *e Collegio Augurum*; was as knowing and tenacious of the Legal Superſtitious, as any of his time: ſo as † he complain'd that many *Auſpices*, many *Auguries* were quite loſt and forgot by the negligence of the Society of Augurs. He was an enemy to all Foreign Rites, and jealous of the leaſt innovation in the Antient Religion and Laws. He procur'd in the Senate, that *Carneades* the Academic, and *Diogenes* the Stoic, Embaſſadors from *Athens*, ſhould immediatly be diſmiſs'd, that they might not corrupt the Youth. He had an averſion

* Pag. 135. † Multa Auſpicia, multa Auguria, quod Cato ille ſapiens queritur, negligentia Collegii amiſſa plane & deſerta ſunt. Cic. Divin. I, 15.

to all Philosophy : in one of his Books he said; *Socrates* (the first in our Author's List) was a * *prating and turbulent Fellow*, for introducing Opinions contrary to his Country Laws and Customs. Now one would hardly have gues'd, that a man of this Character should ever make a good *Free-thinker*. I am rather of opinion, that if *Cato* in his *Censorship* had found one of that Species : he would have taken quicker and better care of him, than your patient Government is like to do of Yours.

But so it is: our Writer has met with a *Bon Mot* of this *Cato's*; which, according to his shalow Understanding and silly Interpretation, he presages *will ever live as a noble Free-thinking Saying*. I'll give it in *Tully's* words, from whom he here cites it; † *Vetus autem illud Catonis admodum scitum est, qui mirari se aiebat, Quod non rideret haruspex, haruspicem cum vidisset*: and he might have added another place, which, since *Cato* is not mention'd there, shews it became Proverbial; ** *Mirabile videtur, Quod non rideat haruspex, cum haruspicem viderit*. This our Author has thus render'd; *I wonder, said Cato, how one of OUR PRIESTS can forbear laughing, when he sees another*. What? *Haruspex* a Priest in general? And one of OUR, that is, the *Roman* Priests? Then *Cato*, who was One and liv'd to be Senior of them, would have libel'd himself: he had ridiculed the Laws establish'd, which he always zealously maintain'd: he had become, what he call'd *Socrates*, a *prating turbulent Fellow*, in doing at *Rome*, what He did at *Athens*. Surely there must be some Mistake: and we shall find it lies no where else, but in our Writer's empty noddle.

* *Δάλον καὶ βίαιον*. Plut. in *Catone* p.640. † *Divin. II, 24.*

** *Nat. Deor. I, 26.*

The whole matter is but this: The College of *Augurs*, of which *Cato* then was one, was of *Roman* Institution, founded by *Numa*: their Divination was made from observations of Birds and several other things within the Sphere of their Discipline; and as they were Persons of the first Quality, and all things were to be done *Auspicato* by their direction; they had vast Influence and Authority in all great Affairs both of Peace and War. But besides this Native Institution, a forein and exotic Sect of Diviners had gradually grown in fashion, the *Haruspices* of *Tuscany*; whose skill and province reach'd to three things, *Extā*, *Fulgura*, & *Ostenta*, *Entrals* of *Cattel*, *Thunders*, and *Monstrous Births*. That These were proper to *Hetruria*, from one *Tages* their Founder; and not establish'd at *Rome*, but sent for and fetch'd thither upon occasions, may easily be prov'd. They are scarce ever mention'd without that hint: *Haruspex Etruscus*, says *Livy*, V, 15. *Haruspices ex Etruria acciti*, XXVII, 37. *Haruspicum scientiam ex Etruria*, says *Cicero*, *Divin.* I, 2. *Haruspices ne ex Etruria arcessentur*, II, 4. *Nostorum Augurum & Etruscorum & Haruspicum* (dele &) *Nat. Deor.* II, 4. and so *Lucan.* I, 584.

Haec propter, placuit Tuscos de more vetusto Acciri vates. and *Martial* III, 24;

Quem Tuscus mactare deo cum vellet Haruspex.

This being observ'd and prov'd, the whole Reason and Drift of *Cato's* Saying will immediatly appear.

For it oftend happen'd, that this Pack of *Hetruscan* Soothsayers gave their Answers quite cross to what the *Roman* Augurs had given: so that the two Disciplines clash'd; the one forbidding as unlucky and unsuccessful, what the other had allow'd as auspicious and prosperous. An example of which is
I recorded

recorded by *Cicero*, *Nat. Deor.* II, 4. While *Tiberius Gracchus* was creating new Consuls; one of the Nominators suddenly fell down dead: however *Gracchus* proceeded and finish'd the Creation. But soon after the People had scruples about it, and the *Haruspices* being consulted said, the Creation was vitious: *How?* says *Gracchus*, in a great rage: *I not create them right, who am both Consul, and Augur, and acted Auspiciously? Do You, * Tuscans and Barbarians, pretend to correct and controul the Auspices of the Romans? And so he bid them be gone.* This was done A. U. C. 591. when *Terence's Heautontimorumenos* was acted, and while *Cato* was alive.

'Tis true, *Gracchus* in this Instance, having recollected himself, found he had omitted one Circumstance directed by the Books of *Auguries*; and so submitted to the *Tuscans*, and added much to their Reputation. But however it's plain from hence, that there was no great kindness between the *Roman Augurs* and Them. For their Disciplines proceeded upon quite different Principles; if the One was suppos'd true, the Other must generally be false. *Cato* therefore, without the least grain of *Free-thinking*, nay out of the true Spirit of Superstition, stood tightly for *Numa's Auguries*; believ'd every tittle of them; and consequently took the *Tuscan Tribe* for a set of Cheats and Impostors. Add to this, his Hatred to all Rites that were Foreign and Exotic; add his own Interest as an *Augur*, against those Rivals in Credit and Authority: and then wonder, if you can, why *Cato* should wonder, *How one Haruspex could forbear laughing, when he saw another.*

And now take a view of our Writer's Learning and Sagacity: *Haruspex* render'd a Priest; which would include in the affront both *Cato* himself and

* *An vos Tусci ac barbari &c.*

all

all his Collegues: and our Priests forsooth; when the Satir is solely pointed at *Tuscans* and *Foreiners*? And what's now become of his ever living Saying? Where are now the footsteps of that noble *Free-thinking* in't? of understanding the whole *Mystery* of the *Roman Religion* as by Law establish'd? *Cato* took the *Tuscan's* for Cheats, conscious of their own Juggles: therefore he knew the whole mystery, and took Himself too for a Cheat. What, *Cato the Grave and the Wise*? A consequence, only fit for our Scribler. It was no *Free-thinking* in *Cato*, but pure *Polemic Divinity*. He adhered superstitiously to *Numa's* and his Country's Rites: and took the *Tuscan Discipline* for Nonsense, without being one jot Wiser himself. And if this makes him a *Free-thinker*; at this rate the *Growing Sect* will multiply prodigiously: all the *Pagans*, that are Fish or Pigeons, are to be admitted *Free-thinkers*; because they contradicted the *Syrians*, who superstitiously abstain'd from Both: The *Tentyrites* of *Egypt* were certainly *Free-thinkers*; because they destroy'd and fed on *Crocodiles*, which the *Ombites* their Neighbors worship'd as Gods: nay the very *Tuscan Haruspices* were passable *Free-thinkers*; for no doubt they reparteed upon *Cato*; and thought as meanly of the *Roman Divinations*, as He did of *Theirs*.

To shew our learned Writer, what a *Free-thinker Cato* was; I'll give him some choice Instances out of his Book *DE RE RUSTICA*; which is certainly *Cato's* own, and so quoted by all the Antients: * his annual offering to *Mars Silvanus* for the health of his Black-Cattel: ^b another to *Juppiter Dapalis*; ^c another to *Ceres, Janus, Jove* and *Juno*: ^d an Attornment for the Lopping of a wood: ^e a Sacrifice for the Lustration of his Grounds, to preserve the Grass, Corn, Fruits, Cattel, and Shepherds from disasters;

* *Cato de Re Rust.* c. 83. b. 132. c. 134. d. 139. e. 141.

and all these with their several Ceremonies, as aukward and absurd as those of the *Pawawers*. But the prime of all is his Charm for a *Luxation* or *Fracture*; which I'll recommend to our Writer with a *Probatum est*, when he has any thing *broken or out of Joint*. *Take, says he, a green Reed, and slit it along the middle: throw the knife upwards; and join the two parts of the Reed again, and tie it so to the place broken or disjointed; and say this Charm, *Daries, dardaries, astataries, dis-sinapiet*: or this, *Huat hanat huat, ista pista fista, domiabo damnaustra*. This will make the Part sound again. Is not this an excellent Specimen of *Cato's Free-thinking*? Does not this Gibberish demonstrate his Penetration into *Mysteries*? Is it not worthy of that refin'd Age, when *Consuls* and *Dictators* were chosen from the Plough? Nor can our Author say, that This is a spurious Receipt: for † *Pliny* mentions this very Charm under *Cato's* Name and Authority; though he excuses himself from repeating it, because of it's Silliness. But as poorly as our Writer comes off with *Cato the Elder*; I fancy he'd anon have still worse Success with *Cato the Younger*.

LIII.

But before he comes to Him, he introduces *CICERO*, as a distinguish'd and eminent *Free-thinker*; in which Section he seems to have taken peculiar Pains; and to strut with an air of Arrogance, quite above his ordinary Mien. He summons all your Divines to receive his Laws for reading and quoting; and to govern themselves by his Instructions, both in the Pulpit and the Press. But how does this

* Cap. 160. † *Nat. Hist.* xvii, in fine. *Carmen contra luxata membra, jungenda arundinum fissuræ, cujus verba inserere non equidem serio ausim, quamquam a Catone prodita.*

Scenical Commander, this Hero in Buskins perform? So wretchedly and forrily; so exactly to the same Tune and his wonted Pitch; that he has not struck one right Stroke, either in Cicero's general Character, or in any passage of His, that he quotes incidentally.

The First word he opens with is this, * *That though Cicero was Chief Priest and Consul, &c.* And what does he mean by *Chief Priest*? No doubt he means *Pontifex Maximus*: for no other word in all the Sacerdotal Colleges of the Romans can admit of that Version. Now a List and Succession of the *Pontifices Maximi* (*Metellus Dalmaticus, Mucius Scaevola, Metellus Pius, Julius Caesar, Aemilius Lepidus*) which concludes all Cicero's time, was ready drawn to our Writer's hand both in *Panvinus's Fasti*, and in *Bosius de Pontificatu Maximo*. He was so far from being *Chief Pontif*, that he was never of that Order; not one of the whole XV: as appears from his Oration *Pro Domo ad Pontifices*, spoken in his Lth year. He was a *Priest* indeed, as I have said before; being made *Augur* in his LIVth year, and succeeding *Crassus* the Younger, who with his Father was slain in *Persia*. What scandalous and puerile Ignorance is this, in a Teacher forsooth of the Clergy, who are Teachers appointed? Cicero the *Chief Priest*? Or rather our Writer the *Chief Blunderer*? He never meddles with the word *Priest*; but Nonsense is his Expiation for't: it sticks to him like *Hercules's* Shirt; and will last him, like that, to his Funeral.

Another Observation he thus dresses, † *That Cicero gives us his own Picture, and that of the greatest part of the Philosophers, when he produces this as an Instance of a Probable opinion, That they who study*

* Pag. 135. † Pag. 136.

Philosophy, don't believe there are any Gods: *that is, That there existed no such Gods as were believ'd by the People.* Now grant our Author this; and yet he obtains no more by it, than that Cicero with most of the Philosophers disbeliev'd the Poëtical and Civil Theology of the Pagans. And if this Picture so much pleases him, or has such strong Lines and Features of *Free-thinking* in't; the very Herd of Christians have a better Title to it, than any of the Philosophers. We are all *Free-thinkers* on that Topic; unless our Writer dissents from us, and would recur to the old Worship of *Bacchus* and *Venus*.

But the Misery of it is, This passage of Cicero is quite misrepresented; nay it proves the very Reverse to what he infers from it. * Every Argumentation, says Tully, ought either to be Probable, or Demonstrative. A thing Probable is either what is generally true, or what is so in Opinion and common Conceit. Of the first sort This is one, If she's a Mother, she loves her Son: Of the second which consists in Opinion, *hujusmodi sunt probabilia*, these are Examples: *Impiis apud Inferos poenas esse paratus: Eos qui Philosophiae dent operam, non arbitrari deos esse: That Torments in Hell are prepared for the Impious: That Philosophers don't think, there are Gods.* Where it's evident to a sagacious Reader, that Tully gives two Instances of Probables, which really he thought False. For *Probabile* in Latin takes in several Ideas of your English, Probable, plausible, likely, specious, seeming; whether it really be true or false, *sive id falsum est sive verum*, as Tully here says exprefs. The first of these about Torments of Hell was then a current, passable, probable Assertion: but Tully himself † disbeliev'd it, and gives it here as a Notion vulgar but false. And the second likewise, That Philosophers are Atheists,

* De Inventionē I, 29. † Tuscul. I, 5, 6. & alibi.

was a Staple Mob opinion : especially at that time, when *Lucretius*, *Amasinius*, and other *Epicureans* were the sole Retailers in *Latin*; that Sect having in that Language got the Start of the rest. But the Orator here exhibits it, not as a true, but a false Probable; and contrary to his own * Sentiment and Example. And what's become now of the *Picture*? 'Tis like the old Story of the Horse painted Tumbling; which posture being not lik'd by the purchaser, upon inverting the Piece the Horse was a Running. Our Writer here imagin'd, That *Cicero* was *pictur'd* an Infidel: and to his great disappointment he's painted a Believer. But see by the way the great Sincerity of our Writer: In his marginal Citation, he has dropt the first Instance about *Hell-Torments*; and given the latter only about *Believing no Gods*; and to disguise it the more; for *Hujusmodi sunt probabilia*, he puts it *Est probabile*: where any person, who looks no farther, must certainly be impos'd on. But if our Writer had given Both; the vigilant Reader without stirring from the Margin had detected the Nonsense. For the two Instances of Probable being both of a kind, either both true or both false; if the first is suppos'd *false*, the latter must be so too; and so our Writer is frustrated. But if the latter is suppos'd *true* (as our Writer propounds it) then the first must be allow'd so too about the *Torments of Hell*: which our Writer abhorring as the most gasty *Picture* in nature, remov'd it out of his Book: and so the Reader seeing but One, could not discover the Painters true meaning. O Dulness, if this was done by chance! O Knavery, if it was done by design!

* Tuscul. De Legibus, &c.

His next Remark upon *Cicero* is still more *mumping* and *beggary*; that were it not for his Pride and Insolence, I should really commiserate him. He'll prove out of the *Tusculan Questions*, that *Cicero* was against the *Immortality of the Soul*: which is exactly, as if he should prove from these Remarks of mine, that I am a Member of his Club. But of that anon: in the mean time, as a Cast of his occasional Learning, he makes the *Dialogist* to be *T. Pomponius ATTICUS*, a great Friend of *Cicero's*, who writ a whole volume of Letters to him. The Interlocutor in the *Tusculans* is mark'd by the Letter A, as *Cicero* is by M: and though some old Copies and Authors too believ'd A signified *Atticus*; yet what was pardonable in Them, is at this time of day, and in a book of Defiance too, a most shameful Blunder in our Writer. The person A was *Adolescens*, a Youth; as appears from II, II; *At tu, adolescens, cum dixisses* &c: how therefore can this be *Atticus*, who was then an Old Man, as your * Learned *Davifus* remarks on the place? *Cicero*, when he writ the *Tusculans* was in his great Climacteric; and *Atticus* was Two years older than He. For *Nepos* says in his Life; That the *Caesarian* Civil War broke out, when *Atticus* was about LX, *cum haberet annos circiter sexaginta*: but *Cicero* was then LVIII. Again he says, *Atticus* died LXXVII years old compleat, *Domitio & Sosio Coss*: and by that reckoning too he was born Two years before *Cicero*. So that our Writer has made a hopeful Youth of him, when he was going of LXV: and makes *Cicero* call a man Youth, who was older than himself. Besides this, who, but our Mirrour of Learning, could be ignorant, that *Atticus* liv'd and died an *Epicurean*? But this

* *Atticus tunc temporis senex erat. Davif. ad Tuscul. I, 5.*

Dialogist is intirely against that Sect, * as appears through the whole. And lastly, what I have noted above in my XLIXth Remark, If *Atticus* here was the Discourser with *Cicero*, he would adhere to his old Principles, and be brought over in nothing: but this *Yanth*, this Inquirer, is a Convert throughout; and convinc'd by good Arguments recedes from every thing that he advances at first. So that there's a vast difference in the Manner of Dispute, that's exhibited in the *Tusculanae*, from what appears in *Academicis*, *De Finibus*, *De Natura Deorum*, and *De Divinatione*. In the latter no man concedes; in the *Tusculans* no man resists. These last were *Scholae*; as *Cicero* from the *Greeks* calls them, Discourses without an Antagonist; rather *Audiences*, than *Conferences*. Which Manner, † he says, was us'd among all the Philosophers, even in the Academy it self: *Qui quaesivit aliquid, tacet: He that has propos'd a Question, holds his tongue.* For as soon as he has said, It seems to me that Pleasure is the Chief Good; the Philosopher disputes against it in a continued discourse: so as it may easily be understood, how they that say a thing seems to them, are not really of that opinion, but want to hear it refuted. This very Manner, which *Cicero* here describes in his year LXII, he executed the year after in his *Tusculanae*: where when A the Auditor says, It seems to me, That Death is an Evil; That Pain is the greatest of all Evils; That Grief or Uneasiness may happen to the Wise-man; That the Wise-man is not free from all Perturbation of Mind; That Virtue alone is not sufficient to a Happy Life (which make the Subject of the V Books) it's plain by *Cicero's* own Comment, that A is of contrary Sentiments, and desires to have all those Positions confuted: which *Cicero* performs to his satisfaction and applause.

* See *Tuscul. I. 23, 32, 34.* † *De Finibus II, 1.*

This being observ'd and premis'd; let us now see, what our sagacious Writer can fetch from the *Tusculans*.

Why, Tully, * says he, after having mention'd the Various Notions of Philosophers about the nature of the Soul, concludes from them, That there can be nothing after Death. Now if a Foreiner may judge of your Language, THE VARIOUS Notions can mean no less than *Singulas Opiniones*, the several and even all the Notions of the Philosophers: which being suppos'd, our Writer will stand convicted either of such Dulness or such Impudence, as nothing can match but his own Book. After Cicero had enumerated the several Opinions about the Soul, That it was the Brain, or the Heart, or the Blood, or Fire, or Breath, or Harmony, or Nothing at all, or an Essential Number, or a Rational Substance, or a Fifth Essence; which soever of these, says he, is true; it will follow that Death is either a Good, or at least not an Evil. For if it be Brain, Blood, or Heart, it will perish with the whole Body; if Fire, it will be extinguish'd; if Breath, it will be dissipated; if Harmony, it will be broke; not to speak of those, that affirm it is Nothing. † *His sententiis omnibus, nihil post mortem pertinere ad quemquam potest*. According to all these Notions (the Seven last repeated) there can be no Concern nor Sensation after Death: Death therefore is no Evil. *Reliquorum autem sententiae &c.* But the Others Opinions (the Three remaining) give hope, that the Soul, after it has left the Body, mounts up to Heaven as it's proper Habitation: Death therefore may be a Good. Now can any thing be plainer, than the Tour of this Paragraph? Ten opinions there are in all; the first Seven make Death no Misery; the last Three make it a Happiness. What then was our Writer's Soul? Was it Brains, or Guts, or rather

* Pag. 136. † *Tuscul. I. 11.*

Nothing

Nothing at all, when he thus maim'd and murder'd the Sense of his Author. From THE VARIOUS *Notions he concludes!* As if the *Seven* were all he had mention'd? As if the *Three* last were not those He espous'd? As if the Authors of the *Seven* were not in His esteem, *Plebeii & minuti Philosophi*, *Plebeian and puny Philosophers*, not worthy of that Name? But our Writer has so long desponded of *mounting up to Heaven*: that he cannot bear it even in the *Stile of a Pagan*: it raises an envious Despair, and spreads it over his Soul. A most just and proper punishment for such Reprobates to Immortality!

Virtutem videant, intabescantque relictæ.

But our Writer goes stumbling on, and adds, * *That as to Plato's Arguments for the Immortality of the Soul*, Cicero says to his Dialogist, *Let us not produce them, and let us lay aside all our Hopes of Immortality.* By which the other understood him to deny the Immortality of the Soul; as is evident from his Answer which follows: *What? do you disappoint me, after you had rais'd in me such an Expectation? Truly I had rather be mistaken with Plato, whom I know how much you esteem, and whom I admire on your authority, than be in the right with others.*

Even my Pen would refuse to be employ'd in such Trash; where it not to chastise our Writer's Confidence; who unqualified to understand one single Page of Cicero, presumes to set up for his Commander and Patron,

Ἀνδρὲς, ὃν ἔδ' αἰνεῖν τοῖσι κακοῖσι θεῖσι,
nay (which all the Muses avert) for his Revisor and Editor. Your Gentry, it seems, were hence forward to taste Cicero through the fetid and poisonous Notes of the *Atheistical Sect.* † *If Cicero's works,* says he, *come once to be generally read, as of all hu-*

* Pag. 137. † Pag. 140.

man Writings they best deserve! Goodly and Gracious! What an Honour is this to Cicero's Ashes? This is what the old Tragic lik'd, *Laudari a laudato viro*. But pray, when was it, that He was *not* generally read? or rather, when did the stupid Sect begin to read him? By the patterns they have given us; they have just as much Title to recommend Cicero, upon their own Talent and Skill; as before they had to recommend the * *Samaritan Chronicle*.

In the Passage now before us; After the Orator had prov'd the Immortality of the Soul from Authority and Tradition, † *the Agreement of all Antiquity, the Consent of all Nations, the Doctrine of the Pythagorean School*: Those Antients, says he, seldom gave Reasons for their Opinions, their Scholars acquiescing in the bare Precept and Maxim: But Plato did not only transmit the Doctrine, but produc'd Reasons and Arguments to establish it: *Sed rationes etiam attulisse; quas, nisi quid dicis, praetermittamus, & hanc totam spem immortalitatis relinquamus; ** which Arguments, unless You say otherwise, let us pass over; and lay aside this whole Hope of Immortality*. The meaning of which is most plain; if we reflect, that the Question here to be debated was only this, *It seems to me that Death is an Evil*: which Cicero had already refuted, even upon the Scheme of the Soul's Extinction: without need of engaging deeper in the proofs of Immortality. So that here in the Socratic way of Dialogue, with Εἰρωνεία, *Disimulation and Urbanity*, he seems willing to drop the Cause, on purpose to raise the Interlocutor's appetite. Who well knowing, this was but a Feint, and that Cicero wanted a little Courting to procede, *What?* says he, *do you now leave me, after you have drawn*

* Remark XXVII. † Omnem Antiquitatem. Consensus nationum omnium. ** Tusc. I. 17.

me into the highest Expectation? Pray, procede with Plato's Arguments: *quocum errare mehercule malo, quam cum ISTIS vera sentire, with whom* (in this affair) I'd rather chuse to be mistaken, than be in the right with THOSE mean Souls, that are content with Extinction. Upon which says the Orator to him, *Maître virtue, God blefs you with that brave Spirit: I my self too should willingly mistake with Him:* and so he enters upon and exhausts the whole Platonic Reasoning for the Soul's Immortality. Now what Odness; what Perverseness of mind in our Scribler, to infer from this Paragraph, *That the Interlocutor thought Cicero denied the Immortality of the Soul?* Is it not just the Reverse? But what need I wonder: when none but such a crook'd and cross grain'd Block could ever be shap'd into an Atheist?

And now we are come to his general Character of Cicero, and the new Key to his Works, which our Bungler has made for the use of your Clergy. *He profess'd, he says, the Academic or Sceptic Philosophy; and the only true method of discovering his Sentiments is to see, what he says Himself, or under the Person of an Academic. To quote any thing else from him as his Own, is an Imposition on the World, begun by some Men of Learning, and continued by Others of little or none.* This is the Sum of our Author's Observations; in which there is Part vulgar and impertinent, and Part false and his Own.

The Academic or Sceptic Philosophy! He might as well say, *The Popish or Lutheran Religion:* the difference between Those being as wide as between These. *A common Imposition of the World!* where, or by whom? Has not Cicero in his Disputations represented the Systemes of the several Sects, with more Clearness and Beauty than they themselves could do? Such Passages have been and will be
quoted,

quoted, out of *Cicero* indeed for the Elegancy of them; but not as his own Doctrines, but of the respective Sects, that there speak them. And what harm is this? The Reasoning is the same, from what quarter soever it comes; and the Authority not the less, though transfer'd from *Cicero* to a *Stoic*. But the *Men of Learning* have blunder'd, and not nicely distinguish'd *Cicero* from the *Stoic*. When he pleases to name those: I'll produce him a *Man of none*, * who has stupidly confounded *Cicero* with the *Epicurean*. And then his sagacious hint, *That Cicero's true Sentiments are to be seen in the Person of the Academic!* This he thought he was safe in; and yet it's as true, as it will appear strange, that His Sentiments are least or not at all to be seen there: of which as briefly as I can.

The *Platonic Academy* dogmatiz'd, or deliver'd their Doctrines for fix'd and certain, as the *Peripatetics* and *Stoics* did. But in the tract of Succession, one *Carneades*, a man of great wit and eloquence, on purpose to shew both, made an Innovation in the Academy. By the notion of *Fix'd and Certain* (*Fixa, Certa, Rata, Decreta*) he was pin'd down to one System; and his great Parts wanted more Room to expatiate and flourish in: he contriv'd therefore a way to get it: he denied the *Certainty of Things*, and admitted of no higher a Knowledge, than *Probability and Verisimilitude*. Not that he did not as much believe, and govern himself in common Life upon what he call'd *Highly Probables*, as the Others did upon their *Certains*: but by this pretty Fetch he obtain'd his End, and became Disputant Universal, *Pro omnibus sectis & contra omnes dicebat*. Did the *Stoics* assert a thing for Certain? He would demolish that Certainty from *Epicurean Topics*. Again, did

* Remark XLVIII.

These last pretend to any Certainty? He would unsay what he spoke for them before; and attack them with *Stoical* Arguments, which just now he had endeavor'd to baffle. This Method gave name to the *New Academy*; but it had few Professors while it lasted, and lasted but a little time: requiring such Wit and Eloquence, such laborious Study in all Sects whatever, and carrying in it's very face such an Air of Pride and Ostentation; that very Few either could or cared to espouse it.

However this very Sect, then deserted and almost forgot, did best agree with the vast Genius and ambitious Spirit of young *Cicero*. He was possess'd of Oratory in it's perfection: and he had added Philosophy under the best Masters of all Sects, *Diodotus*, *Antiochus*, *Philo*, *Posidonius*, and others: He would not confine himself to one System, but range through them all: so the *New Academy* was chosen, as the largest Field to shew his Learning and Eloquence. Which Turn when he had once taken, he was always to maintain: he was to rise no higher than *Probability*, the Characteristic of the Sect. For This was their Badge of Servitude, though they boasted of more Freedom, than the Others. Did a *Stoic* assert the *Certainty* of Divine Providence? You are tied down, says an *Academic*: it's only a *Probable*. You are tied as much, replies the *Stoic*; for though you believe it as firmly as I, you dare not say it's *Certain*, for fear of Clashing with your Sect.

If we take *Cicero* under this View, we shall then truly be qualified to interpret all his Writings. And first we shall find, what I said before, and which at once breaks to pieces our Writer's new Key, That the *Academic* Objections, which in his Philosophical Conferences are ever brought against the other Sects, is the most unlikely place where to find his real Sentiments.

timents. For that being the Privilege of the Sect, to speak *Pro* or *Con* as they pleas'd, * *Contra omnia dici oportere & pro omnibus*, † *Contra omnes Philosophos & pro omnibus dicere*; they very frequently oppos'd, ** *non ex animo sed simulate, not heartily but feignedly*; not what they really believ'd, but what serv'd the present turn. In *De Natura Deorum*, when Balbus the Stoic had spoken admirably for the Existence of the Gods and Providence, Cotta the Academic (though he was a Priest, one of the *Pontifices*) undertakes the opposite side, †† *non tam resellere ejus orationem, quam ea quae minus intellexit requirere*; not so much to refute his discourse, as to discuss some points he did not fully understand: and after he had finish'd his Attack with great copiousness and subtilty, yet in the close he owns to Balbus, ¶ *That what he had said, was for Dispute's sake, not his own Judgment; that he both desir'd that Balbus would confute him; and knew certainly that he could do it.* And Cicero himself, who was then auditor at the Dispute, though of the same Sect with Cotta, declares his own Opinion, *That the Stoic's Discourse for Providence seem'd to him more PROBABLE, than Cotta's against it*; which he repeats again in *De Devinatione* I, 5. And what now becomes of our Writer's *True method* and Rule? Whatsoever is spoken under the Person of an Academic, is that to be taken for Cicero's Sentiment? Why, Cicero declares here, that he sided with the Stoic against the Academic: and whom are we to believe, Himself or our silly Writer?

When Cicero says above, that the Stoical Doctrine of Providence seem'd to him more PROBABLE: if we take it aright, it carries the same importance as when a Stoic says it's CERTAIN and DEMONSTRABLE.

* Acad. II, 18. † Nat. Deor. I, 5. ** Nat. Deor. II, *fine*.
†† Nat. Deor. III, 1. ¶ Nat. Deor. III, *fine*.

For, as I remark'd before, the Law, the Badge, the Characteristic of his *Sect* allow'd him to affirm no stronger than that: he durst not have spoken more peremptorily about a Proposition of *Euclid*, or what he saw with his own Eyes. His *Probable* had the same influence on his Belief, the same force on his Life and Conduct; as the Others *Certain* had on Theirs. Nay within his own Breast he thought it as much *Certain* as they: but he was to keep to the *Academic* Style; which solely consisted in that Point, That nothing was allow'd *Certum, comprehensum, perceptum, ratum, firmum, fixum*; but our highest Attainment was *Probabile & Verisimile*. He that reads his works with penetration, judgment, and diligence, will find this to be true, That *Probable* in his *Sect* is equivalent to *Certain*. For what he says of *Socrates*, exactly fits himself; where reporting his last Words, *Whether it's better live or die, the Gods alone know; of Men I believe none knows*: As to what *Socrates* speaks, says he, that none but the Gods know, whether is better; *He himself KNOWS it; for he had said it before*: * *Sed sum illud, nihil ut affirmet, tenet ad extremum: but he keeps his Manner to the last, to affirm nothing for CERTAIN.*

If we seek therefore for *Cicero's* true Sentiments; it must not be in his Disputes against Others, where he had licence to say any thing for opposition sake: but in the Books where he dogmatizes himself; where allowing for the word *Probable*, you have all the Spirit and Marrow of the *Platonic, Peripatetic, and Stoic* Systemes; I mean his Books *De Officiis, Tusculanae, De Amicitia, De Senectute, De Legibus*; in which, and in the Remains of others now lost, he declares for the Being and Providence of God, for the Immortality of the Soul, for every Point that ap-

* *Tuscul. I. 42.*

proaches to Christianity. Those Three Sects he esteems, as the sole Ornaments of Philosophy; the Others he contemns: and the *Epicureans* he lashes throughout; not only for their base and abject Principles, but for their neglect of all Letters, Eloquence, and Science. And I must do him this Justice: that as his *Sect* allow'd him to chuse what he lik'd best, and what he valued as most *Probable*, out of all the various Systemes; he always chuses like a knowing and honest Man. If in any point of Moral, one Author had spoken nobler and loftier than another; he is sure to adopt the worthiest Notion for his Own, and to cloth it in a finer Dress with new beauties of *Stile*.

T A N T U M.



E R R A T A.

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